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Report of the Organizing Committee of the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AT THE HEART OF QUÉBEC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

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CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AT THE HEART OF QUÉBEC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Report of the Organizing Committee of the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions

Presented To

Jean-Pierre Charbonneau, Minister responsible for the Reform of Democratic Institutions

By

The Organizing Committee of the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions

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Monique Vézina, citizen activist since 1960.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A remarkable process of citizen consultation on democracy and our political institutions comes to a close with the tabling of the report of the Organizing Committee on the Reform of Democratic Institutions. Titled ***Citizen Participation at the Heart of Québec's Democratic Institutions***, this paper is the culmination of an exercise unprecedented in the history of Québec.

For the first time ever, this was made possible thanks to the initiative of the *Minister responsible for the Reform of Democratic Institutions, Jean-Pierre Charbonneau*, thanks to the support of the *Premier of Québec, Bernard Landry*, and of *Cabinet*, thanks to the initiative of a group of citizens who took on the mandate to encourage citizens to clearly express their expectations regarding their democratic institutions and, by holding the Estates General, to express a collective will.

I thank the members of the Organizing Committee who, throughout their mandate, were inspired by the desire to make sure that the outcome of reforming our institutions puts greater power in the hands of Québec's citizens. Thank you *Jean Allaire, Martine Blanc, Joseph Giguère, Emmanuelle Hébert, Brenda Paris, Christian Robitaille, Bernard J. Shapiro* and *Monique Vézina, as well as the Secretary, Michel Laflamme, and all of the staff of the Organizing Committee in both Montréal and Québec City*.

The Organizing Committee also thanks the representatives from the regions of Québec who contributed to the success of our visits in various towns and cities, and who did a great job stimulating local interest prior to the tremendous event that was the Estates General. Thank you to all of those who, in one way or another, contributed to the immense success of the Estates General, in particular the devoted team members from the Ministère du Conseil exécutif, the Secrétariat à la réforme des institutions démocratiques and the Secrétariat à la communication gouvernementale who made the Estates General such an exceptional and memorable experience. Thanks also to the hundred or so session presidents for their ability to stimulate exchange. Finally, thanks to the thousands of citizens who took part in our consultations and who, in doing so, have given democracy new life. They turned out in great number to meet us, write to us, submit their thoughts in briefs and to share their points of view at the Estates General. Their contributions ensured that our process would be a success.

Last, I would like to thank *Micheline Lecomte* and *Pierrette Lambert* who, in addition to studying the written briefs, took on the task of drafting this report.

Claude Béland
Chair
Organizing Committee of the Estates General
on the Reform of Democratic Institutions

Québec City, March 10, 2003

Mr. Minister:

On behalf of the members of the Organizing Committee on the Reform of Democratic Institutions, it is my pleasure to submit our report titled ***Citizen Participation at the Heart of Québec's Democratic Institutions***.

Upon accepting this important assignment, we recognized the firm intention of the Québec government to reduce what is now commonly referred to as the democratic deficit that currently exists in Québec and, indeed, in many countries.

We criss-crossed the province of Québec, and heard from the citizens who turned out to meet with us. We studied the numerous briefs so carefully prepared by more than 200 of them and analyzed the results of numerous questionnaires stemming from the inquiries that formed part of the consultation process. We took the time to hear the points of view of many experts and different groups, and to take part in debates in various forums. Last, we held the Estates General, which brought together about one thousand people from every part of Québec. This momentous event was an undeniable success.

Three striking facts stand out at the conclusion of our work. First, *the concern for the health of Québec democracy* is very strongly and very deeply felt. Second, *there is an obvious desire to ensure that the will of the people is heeded*. Finally, *citizen awareness about the importance of reforming Québec's democratic institutions* is very high. Québecers also have a keen appreciation of the priorities that have to be established with regard to such reform.

Through this report, the Organizing Committee takes pride in testifying to the vitality and quality of citizen participation in the reflective process in which everyone, from citizens to organized groups, was invited to take part. In this regard, we have observed with great satisfaction that the reform of democratic institutions has already been vigorously addressed by numerous citizen initiatives.

This observation convinces us that the findings of this wide-scale outreach that is coming to its end will provide the first milestones in a *systematic effort to reform our democratic institutions*.

In concluding, Mr. Minister, we wish to thank you for your confidence in entrusting us with this task. It was for us all an exceptional opportunity to better understand, appreciate, nurture and protect the democratic life of Québec.

Respectfully,

Claude Béland
Chair
Organizing Committee of the Estates General
on the Reform of Democratic Institutions

FOREWORD

In spite of the democratic deficit discussed repeatedly in this report, Québec remains one of the most democratic societies in the world. The proof of this is the very process of examining the state of democracy within the community and the interest in reforming our democratic institutions, guardians of the values of equality, liberty, responsibility and solidarity. Our travels through Québec have enabled us to state with pride that interest in a living democracy is very great. The citizens of Québec express their opinions openly and without restraint. They have taken their rightful place in the movement to reform society's democratic institutions.

In all regions and from all walks of life, citizens came forward to express their appreciation for and their happiness at being able to freely exercise their right to participate. At the same time, they underscored the importance of nurturing and protecting the precious gift that is democracy.

During this consultation, we were very often touched by the level of awareness of our fellow citizens with respect to the rest of the world. They constantly returned to the importance of contributing, along with all of the world's citizens, to building a worldwide democracy, particularly in the context of the weakening of freedoms that is evident around the planet.

The critical spirit that informs this report from time to time is, in the opinion of the Organizing Committee, an astounding illustration of the degree of confidence that the citizens of Québec have in their democratic institutions. Few countries on Earth can claim with pride that their citizens can express converging, diverging and emerging points of view.

The Organizing Committee is proud to be the bearer of this dialogue that asserts and demands ***that citizen participation be at the heart of Québec's democratic institutions****.*

THE MANDATE

THE ESTATES GENERAL ON THE REFORM OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

The convening of the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions stems directly from the process proposed to Cabinet by the Minister responsible for this reform and as expressed in the discussion paper, *Citizen Empowerment*. Arising out of expressions of citizen dissatisfaction with our traditional political institutions, the process was intended to open up public debate, motivate the population of every region to communicate their expectations clearly and, finally, by convening the Estates General, lead to an expression of the popular will.

To ensure the success of the process, Cabinet established an Organizing Committee on the Reform of Democratic Institutions, whose make-up reflected the reality of Québec: a mix of young and old, men and women, and also including representatives of the Anglophone community and other cultural communities.

In carrying out its mandate, the Organizing Committee was supported throughout Québec by 17 regional representatives, or one per region. Each of these people helped to prepare for the Organizing Committee's visit to the regions and, in some cases, assumed the role of local facilitator during the process: distributing consultation documents, local and regional media contact, selecting participants to the Estates General and providing them with information. All of these regional representatives joined the nine members of the Organizing Committee to form the Office of the Estates General.

The Organizing Committee's primary responsibility was to organize, prepare and hold the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions. To do so, the Committee carried out far-reaching consultation with the Québec population on the issues covered in the reform process, received briefs from individuals and organized bodies and consulted experts on political institutions. The findings of the Organizing Committee throughout the various consultations were submitted to the participants in the Estates General in order to carry the discussion farther and to better prepare recommendations for the Organizing Committee. These in turn are presented to the Minister responsible for the Reform of Democratic Institutions.

This process is unique in the history of Québec. The members of the Organizing Committee hope it will begin a discussion that, by placing citizen participation at the heart of democratic institutions, will help to make Québec a model of democracy in the new global world.

Activities carried out

During the work on the reform of democratic institutions, the participants showed their interest concretely and expressed their opinions in different ways as the summary of the activities that were carried out indicates.

During its tour, the Organizing Committee:

- Held 27 town hall meetings in 20 cities and 16 different regions;
- Met with more than 2,050 people;
- Heard 735 oral presentations over the course of the public hearings;
- Received 581 completed questionnaires over the course of the hearings;
- Received a total of 2,508 questionnaires, including those from the hearings.

The Committee also received 237 briefs from organized groups and from citizens:

- *The main political parties and their affiliated organizations:* the Action démocratique du Québec, the Comité national des jeunes du Parti québécois, the Parti québécois de Montréal Centre, the Québec Liberal Party, and the Bloc québécois.
- *Various unions*: the CSN, the CSN du Bas-Saint-Laurent, du Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, du Montréal métropolitain et de l'Estrie, the Syndicat des professeurs du Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf, the Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec.
- *Women's groups*: the Collectif Féminisme et Démocratie, the Groupe Femmes, Politique et Démocratie, the Conseil du statut de la femme, the Fédération des femmes du Québec.
- *Youth and student groups*: the Société de la jeunesse Anglophone, the Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec, the Forum jeunesse de l'île de Montréal, the Confédération des associations d'étudiants et d'étudiantes de l'Université Laval, the Fédération des associations étudiantes du campus de l'Université de Montréal, the Conseil permanent de la jeunesse, the Fédération universitaire du Québec.
- *Organizations representing cultural communities and First Nations*: the Forum d'action des communautés culturelles and, the Odanak Abenaki government. The conseil des relations interculturelles.
- *Many regional organizations*: the Regoupement des citoyens de Saguenoa, the Regional County Municipality of Témiscamingue, the Conseils régionaux de développement de l'Estrie, Abitibi-Témiscamingue and the Côte-Nord, Solidarité rurale du Québec.
- *Groups operating in various fields*: the Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec, the Mouvement Démocratie nouvelle, the Board of Trade of Montreal Metropolitan, the Comité anti-zléa de l'Outouais, the Greater Quebec Movement, the Observatoire québécois de la démocratie, the Mouvement national des Québécoises et Québécois, the Conseil de la santé et du bien-être, the Chambre des notaires
- *Numerous citizens, among them*: Claude Bariteau, Claude Corbo, Diane Lamoureux, Serge Roy, Guy Bertrand, Christian Dufour, Paul Cliché and Pierre-F. Côté.

Media presentations:

- *Nearly 100 articles* about the reform process were published in 22 different newspapers. Before and during its tour, the Organizing Committee was the subject of more than 80 articles published in Québec's print media.

- *Thinkers publicly took positions* on the various subjects on the reform menu, among them Christian Dufour, Henri Brun, Louis Massicotte and Claude Bariteau.

- *Many citizens expressed their opinions* in the editorial pages of Québec's newspapers. A Web site, www.pouvoircitoyen.com, was also made available.

- The Committee members also took part in various activities such as conferences and radio shows.

During the Estates General:

- The Organizing Committee welcomed nearly one thousand people who participated actively in the workshops and, through their votes, expressed preferences or opinions on the proposals presented to them.

PRESENTATION OF THE REPORT

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AT THE HEART OF QUÉBEC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

The report of the *Organizing Committee on the Reform of Democratic Institutions* is titled ***Citizen Participation at the Heart of Quebec's Democratic Institutions***. This title was chosen for two reasons: on one hand, it accurately reflects the spirit of the task conferred by the Québec government to gather the points of view of citizens and organized groups with regard to their democratic institutions and, second, because *citizen empowerment* remained the Organizing Committee's leitmotif from the beginning to the end of the consultation process.

The document contains four parts. The first part, **The Citizens' View of Québec's Democratic Institutions in 2003**, presents *the current state of affairs with respect to democratic institutions in the eyes of the citizens* who took part in the consultation process. The portrait has been assembled based on the information gathered during the tour of Québec, from the briefs submitted to the Committee, from the answers to the questionnaire distributed throughout the process, from the comments made at the hearings held by the Organizing Committee, during participation by Committee members in various events and during the Estates General that brought together nearly one thousand participants from all regions of Québec, and also from a review of published material.

The second part attempts to reply to the questions surrounding the necessity of reforming Québec's democratic institutions. The elements that underlie this response are the nature and scope of the amendments to be made, the appropriateness of the timing, the order of priority and the consequences for the democratic life of the citizens throughout the province.

The third part, **The Organizing Committee's Recommendations for Putting Citizen Participation at the Heart of Democratic Institutions**, states the point of view of the Committee and the arguments that led it to formulate its recommendations.

The fourth part is the **Conclusion** of the process. The Organizing Committee discusses its overall findings on the process and suggests some avenues for reflection on the next steps. In this respect, the Committee takes a bearing on the main challenges to democracy facing the Québec State and its citizens in the age of globalization: improving the understanding and exercise of democracy, the ownership and sharing of power, and the foundations for the success of democratic institutional reform.

PART ONE

THE CITIZENS' VIEW OF QUÉBEC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IN 2003

In this first part, the Organizing Committee reviews the essence of the comments heard, the opinions expressed, the criticisms presented, and the dreams and hopes or desires put into words about the State and the citizens with regard to the steps needed to ensure a healthy democracy in Québec.

Like the citizens, the Organizing Committee was thankful that **reviewing our democratic spaces allowed them:**

- First, to speak about what democracy means in their lives, what it is not and what it should be.
- Second, to express what they feel about democracy in their hearts and heads.
- Third, to raise new options for citizen participation.
- Fourth, to debate various major issues in order that our institutions better reflect a Québec in development.

REVIEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC SPACES HAS PERMITTED CITIZENS TO SPEAK ABOUT DEMOCRACY IN THEIR LIVES, WHAT IT IS NOT AND WHAT IT SHOULD BE

The Organizing Committee acknowledges, through citizen comments and commitment, a diversity of democratic understanding, experience and practice. For some, it is above all an understanding based on the practical and instinctive experience of their relationship to the State and of its influence on how their individual and community lives are organized. Others rely more on political, philosophical, social and legal concepts to approach the subject. Still others deal with the issue of democratic institutions based on concerns about the efficiency of the socioeconomic system and the political stability of the government and of the State.

These levels of perception of what democratic institutions are, of what they are not and of what they should be illustrate clearly the need for and the complexity of democratic debate, particularly at a time when it is important to update the institutions in order to face the challenges of contemporary life.

Naturally, citizen thinking on these institutions stems from different motives and interests. However, this thinking calls to mind the great importance that must be given to social and ethical values, which are:

- The equality of citizens before the law.
- The sovereignty of the people.
- The guarantee by the State of the rights of its citizens.

- The defence of individual liberties.

- Citizen responsibility.

Citizens understand in their own ways that, in order to live together in harmony and mutual respect, they must organize themselves, share responsibilities and trust each other. They realize the importance of establishing a framework of laws, and authorities for managing the plans, assets and finances that each person agrees to accept as common.

However, citizens are realizing more and more, with some concern and with greater frustration, how complex this social contract is in a Québec that has to deal with its own contemporary society as well as the phenomenon of globalization. These two elements affect the role of the State in relation to citizen participation and the powers that are entrusted to the citizens.

In these times when social, political, cultural and economic transformations are far-reaching, the discomfort of the citizens is palpable in the face of increasingly rapid change and the speed with which decisions must be made to keep up with it. Accordingly, communities need time to properly grasp the major issues that effect their lives and the lives of future generations. They require conditions that are favourable for expressing their points of view about the directions and policies proposed by their elected representatives. They need the means to rally around those actions they feel relevant. They require new powers in order to exercise concrete and realistic control over their government.

Taking into account this context that puts constraints on citizen participation allows us to better understand the main disappointments that individuals and communities feel toward democracy. In the face of these difficulties, many of them feel simultaneously threatened and harassed.

Some of them start local consciousness-raising campaigns. Others form organized groups and try to broaden reflective thinking, debate and the citizen solidarity movement.

Throughout all of this citizen involvement, a real interest is apparent in searching for solutions to protect, regenerate and update democratic life in Québec. In this time of the globalizing economy, a considerable number of Québecers assert the importance of placing their citizen commitment in the broader context of a process to globalize democracy.

It is primarily these persons and groups that came out to meet with the Organizing Committee to share their thoughts, their concerns, their hopes and their vision for a democracy that reflects Québec and is rooted in the daily life of its citizens.

There is no need to point out that citizens do not all speak with one voice. Some persons and groups declare themselves firmly in favour of major changes because they believe it is necessary to bring our democratic institutions into line with contemporary realities and the challenges that loom for future generations.

Others express their wish to make minor adjustments, citing the rules of the current political framework and the stability it provides.

For them, sweeping institutional change seems unjustified and risks compromising the strength and cohesiveness of Québec society. It is noteworthy that the viewpoints of several of the experts on political systems who were heard lean in this direction.

The Organizing Committee welcomed all of these varying points of view and took them into consideration throughout the analysis and recommendation process.

REVIEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC SPACES HAS PERMITTED CITIZENS TO EXPRESS WHAT THEY FEEL ABOUT DEMOCRACY IN THEIR HEARTS AND HEADS

The *public heart*, if we may use the expression, is troubled. A deep feeling of disillusionment with politics is sweeping across Québec. Citizen frustration is palpable in the face of their powerlessness to influence, in the ways they would like to, decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their peers. Among their major disappointments is the current voting procedure where citizens feel that their votes are not truly and systematically reflected by the mix of members who sit in the National Assembly.

That they are torn between heart and head is obvious. While citizens try as they might to understand the complexities of democratic life in the modern world, they feel strongly that things are not going in the right direction. They repeatedly stress that they do not feel they are actively and truly taking part in the political, economic and social future of Québec.

Our experience in the field, however, shows that citizens are not abandoning their dream of democracy. The remain interested in, and motivated to face, the challenges. The democratic process is probably what best embodies Québecers' current vision of society.

Thus, while faith in the current practice of democracy may, in some cases, be sadly shaken, the citizens believe in it, want it and insist on having it. The quality of citizen contributions and the number of people who took part in the consultation process on the reform of democratic institutions are indeed an incontestable illustration of this.

This collective exercise will, among others things, have contributed to reviving the taste for debate about the higher interests of Québecers. It will also have allowed us, as we are now seeing, to interpret and appreciate democracy better for what it is, to better seize new options for citizen participation and to decide on certain issues that will mean our institutions reflect Québec more faithfully as it develops.

REVIEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC SPACES HAS PERMITTED RAISING NEW OPTIONS FOR CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

Throughout our mandate, the Organizing Committee has continually had to deal with the numerous difficulties of citizens to understand, take ownership of and believe in the relevance of exercising their democratic responsibilities.

Generally, those who spoke out feel that the role assumed by the State on the basis of its democratic institutions should be reviewed and adapted to the new realities of Québec. To this effect, here are the main elements of discomfort with democracy that the Organizing Committee found.

The majority of the stakeholders heard believe that government decisions are made at the top, usually by a few people who are often influenced by a very small circle who, often, are not elected. They think that these decisions are based on incomplete and inadequate information. The decisions are not in the best interest of democracy and show that the current political structure does not actually reflect the will of the people.

Furthermore, it is felt that there is not enough fairness regarding access to political power related to financial resources, media space and the rules of the game of the political parties surrounding the selection, recruiting and training of candidates, as well as the standards that determine political culture.

All in all, the citizens are demanding more power. They feel that the current organization of Québec governance is not suited to the demands on democracy that arise in the context of globalization. They feel it does not sufficiently accommodate the seeping currents of change within Québec, such as the effects on the exercise of democracy of a lack of preparation for renewing the workforce and the ageing of the population, the impact of the shift toward computers on democratic expression, the need for new spaces for democratic debate, and the consequences of media concentration on the vitality and quality of democracy. In short, they make felt their powerlessness in the face of the political establishment and their frustration at not succeeding, in any significant way, in influencing how the institutions are organized and run.

Concretely, citizens complain about:

- The powerlessness of the majority with regard to their democratic institutions.
- The current voting procedure that, for many, limits ideological pluralism in a majority vote regime where individual votes are not sufficiently reflected in the overall result.
- The concentration of power in the hands of the government.
- The executive's excessive regulatory powers that diminish the powers and prerogatives of the National Assembly.
- The role of MNAs and the difficulty they have responding to the expectations of many voters. The obligation of MNAs always to tow the party line.
- The risk of concentrating decision-making powers over development activities-economic as much as social and cultural-in the most heavily populated areas to the detriment of the development of all the inhabited areas of Québec.
- The power of the Premier to call elections at the times he sees fit.
- The lack of understanding of the majority of voters about political systems, democratic institutions and the platforms of the political parties.
- The complexity of the mechanics of government and its many layers.

- The persistent difference in male-female representation in the National Assembly.
- The weakness of the next generation in Québec's democratic bodies.
- The difficulty for representatives from the various ethnocultural constituencies to represent them within existing democratic and political institutions.
- The absence of First Nations representation.
- The numerous cases of fraud or irregularity that still occur at election time.
- The lack of effective control over government management.

REVIEWING OUR DEMOCRATIC SPACES HAS PERMITTED CITIZENS TO DEBATE VARIOUS MAJOR ISSUES IN ORDER THAT OUR INSTITUTIONS BETTER REFLECT A QUÉBEC IN DEVELOPMENT

In looking at the information gathered, the Organizing Committee notes two major issues relative to our democratic institutions that citizens referred to continually in one way or another. These issues are political representation and citizen participation, and government efficiency.

Issue one: Political representation and citizen participation

A good number of stakeholders from all sectors of society sense that, with regard to the machinery of government, they have little power or influence. They do not, either, think their elected representatives (their MNAs) have much more because of the limitations of party discipline. This statement by one citizen illustrates clearly the broadly shared spirit of this perception: *Citizens like their MNA. MNAs like their party. Parties like power . . .*

In short, according to them, the organization and functioning of our democratic institutions do not actually incorporate certain values that they deem fundamental and that they expect. So, in their opinion, their institutions do not truly reflect equal representation for men and women, Québec's diversity, which includes ethnocultural diversity, and the importance of the regions. They call for greater social equity.

A democratic deficit is also sharply evident in municipal and school authorities, boards of directors and general assemblies of public institutions and political parties. It is felt that these bodies are losing their substance as well as their democratic culture. Considerable emphasis was placed on the need for them to find their way back to civic practices focused on the common good and to their role as communicators of democratic understanding and values.

Issue two: Government efficiency

On the subject of government efficiency, the stakeholders from the various sectors of society feel that the organization of governance is not adapted to the democratic needs that arise from internationalization and globalization. They also felt that governance does not take into account phenomena such as the need for new spaces for democratic debate, the great need for more comprehensive citizen education, the need to prepare the next generation to participate as citizens, the impact of the transition to the information society on access to democracy and its expression, and the consequences of media concentration for the vitality and quality of democracy.

There are many who recall the desire, and the efforts made over the years, to reform certain democratic institutions. For example, it is often raised that Québecers have been talking about reforming the voting procedure since 1902 and that many groups have succeeded each other to work toward these reforms. According to them, the political parties demonstrate a degree of opportunism when the time comes to implement the desired changes.

With respect to this, the laxity felt in the process to update the functioning of certain democratic institutions, particularly as regards the voting procedure, contributes to undermining the perception of government efficiency.

Moreover, citizens become worried when, in the interest of government efficiency, democratic processes are short-circuited, when they see that debates are increasingly held outside the National Assembly and the parliamentary committees and that growing numbers of government directives issue directly from the executive, thereby bypassing the power of the lawmakers.

As a result, the citizens consulted say that they would like a type of governance that is more open and participatory. In this new type of governance, the decision process is spread throughout society and remains tied to the power of the legislature. Decisions are grounded on relevant information and on the principle of common good. In this way, they become more in keeping with democratic processes.

Citizens hope for adherence to the vision of a society based on citizen participation and State accountability with regard to its role of ensuring the survival and fulfilment of all citizens in the current context of globalization. For all practical purposes, they want our democratic institutions to update themselves on the technological, cultural and social levels so as to facilitate citizen participation and access to political power.

When it comes to defining the nature and scope of the changes to be made to our democratic institutions, many people sound the alarm over possible consequences for the political stability of Québec. In fact, they fear that, given the current federal framework, Québec might lose strength as the only French-speaking State in North America.

Besides this, many people are concerned about the effects of globalization on the role of the State and democracy, as well as the erosion of social and individual values. They wonder about the effects that sweeping institutional change might have on the sharing of a common vision and on the cohesiveness of Québec society.

In this respect, many point to the need to endow Québec with a *constitution*, adopted by its citizens, which would lay down the form of government and the rules for the relationships between the governing and the governed. It would also spell out the powers of citizens and how government should be organized.

In the face of any changes to come, a relatively widespread attitude is evident. Citizens want any changes, especially those concerning the political system, to be the subject of prerequisite impact studies and information campaigns, and that they be submitted to the population before being put in place. These requirements concern equally both reform of the political system and the voting procedure, as well as social or administrative laws and measures designed to facilitate access to political power.

In a similar vein, citizens are clear that preparing these changes should not retard the process of updating our democratic institutions but, rather, ensure that such changes are properly managed.

Concretely, citizens ask that:

- The rules for exercising democracy in Québec be modified in such a way that the Québecers who wish to can have greater involvement in the legislative power and, collectively, better exercise some control.

- Voting procedures be reviewed so as to encourage the presence of new parties and accord to the party that obtains the greatest number of votes the corresponding number of seats in the National Assembly.

- An end be put to the concentration of power in the hands of the government executive and the Premier's cabinet.

- Executive power not impinge on the power of the National Assembly.

- The role of MNAs be redefined and that their new role be better understood and accepted by voters.

- Citizens be better informed of how democratic institutions and political party platforms function.

- The rules of governance and how government functions as a service provider for all citizens be reviewed and adapted to the current context.

- The presence of women be encouraged so as to move as much as possible toward true parity between women and men in the National Assembly.

- We prepare the next generation better so that it takes a more active part in political life.

- New overtures be made to native peoples so they take part in the democratic functioning of Québec.

- Concrete measures be taken to guarantee the security of the electoral process.

- New control procedures be implemented in order to ensure better monitoring of government management.

- MNAs be released from party discipline, at least in certain areas.

- The voting procedure take into account Quebec's geography and the importance of developing the whole province.

- Setting election dates not be decreed at the sole discretion of the Premier.

CONCLUSION

The Organizing Committee concludes that the citizens of Québec are taking a lucid, brave and committed look at their democratic institutions. While a degree of cynicism tinges their dialogue, they are aware of the importance of maintaining a high level of democracy within our democratic institutions and they are not letting go of the types of change that they want to see occur.

In this regard, the members of the Organizing Committee would like to highlight the wide range of citizen contributions to the consultation process. This means that, among the many briefs received, are complete proposals relative to voting procedures, detailed models of electoral processes and varying types of political systems. The people and groups that took the time to think, to carry out research (often very broad-based thanks to the Internet), to state their proposals (many people held consultations in their own milieus) and, last, took the time to write their briefs.

The body of work that was done is colossal and does honour to the democratic spirit of Québecers. The scope of this citizen contribution has shown the Organizing Committee how mature Québec democracy is. Above all, it allows us to give the government the means to move much farther, more surely and more rapidly in the direction of the changes that are hoped for, to be planned and carried out with all of the democratic competence we expect.

In summary, we note that the majority of the citizens of Québec are in favour of being closer to the State as well as having a better understanding of their respective roles and duties. They show the desire to develop their individual and collective democratic potential by:

- Understanding better how their institutions function.

- Having greater access to political power and control.

- Having an influence on democratic practices and the political culture.

- Participating actively in decisions and changes that will affect their individual and collective lives.

- And finally, engaging in a more informed exercise and defence of their democratic rights.

Having drawn an overall picture, the Organizing Committee applied itself to developing a vision of the change by suggesting the most fruitful avenues for reform for all citizens to ensure the democracy of Québec's institutions and maintain efficient government.

In the second part of this report, we go directly to the heart of this quest for meaning and efficiency in organizing and running our institutions and in exercising our democratic rights.

PART TWO

WHY AND HOW SHOULD WE REFORM OUR DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS?

The second part attempts to reply to the questions surrounding the necessity of reforming Québec's democratic institutions. The elements that underlie this response are the nature and scope of the amendments to make, the appropriateness of the timing, the order of priority and the consequences for the democratic life of citizens throughout the province.

Whether from the standpoint of the overall level of satisfaction with the organization of, the functioning of and the reflection of Québec's realities within our democratic institutions or from the point of view of government efficiency, the need to give citizens more power over their democratic institutions is clear.

If we take it that the need for change expressed in the current context of Québec and, more broadly, in the context of globalization simultaneously affects the nature, structure and functioning of our democratic institutions, we are obliged to admit that the level of reform demanded is high.

The citizens recognize that, in the past, Québec's institutional framework provided political stability, government efficiency and relative citizen satisfaction. But things change. Satisfaction is no more. Government efficiency is questioned from all sides, as witnessed by the media that talk about it almost daily. Some people think that political stability is more and more like political stagnation. It becomes a vicious circle within which everyone is powerless.

In the Organizing Committee's opinion, this trend shows that it is time to update our institutions to better reflect Québecers' democratic hopes and satisfy the demands for government efficiency.

A FAR-REACHING UPGRADE OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS IS NECESSARY

The Organizing Committee believes that the main bodies within our democratic system need to be overhauled if we want to be able to face the challenges of our own age and prepare for the future. In addition, various avenues must be explored so we can better adapt to the new options for exercising democracy.

In 2003, it is important to update certain fundamental elements of our political system and our voting procedure. Moreover, it is clear that the participation of the regions in the decisions of the government and the National Assembly is a central issue of concern for all of the groups consulted. Likewise, citizens are interested in involving the First Nations in the functioning of democracy in Québec, under conditions that are satisfactory to all. The time is also ripe for implementing certain elements of direct democracy, for taking action and for introducing measures designed to ensure equal representation of men and women. Last, it is necessary to provide effective means of reflecting Québec's diversity and to prepare appropriate responses to the new expectations of our community.

Of course, the changes to be made are not all of the same scope and they do not all have the same degree of urgency. Several adjustments can be made within the existing framework. Relaxing party discipline is a good example of a change that involves a new political practice but that does not carry with it a major upheaval in the structure of the State. On the other hand, changing the voting procedure engages sweeping political, economic and social changes.

In the light of these examples, it is clear that the Québec citizens and State have choices to make. Choices that are in the interest of social values rooted in the sovereignty of the citizens, choices that are in the interest of government efficiency and stability. These requirements form the basis for the Organizing Committee's analysis and recommendations concerning the reform of Québec's democratic institutions.

At this point, the Organizing Committee is referring to updating our democratic institutions. The Organizing Committee is of the opinion that this means building on the existing strengths of our institutions to improve and update our practices, our political customs and our understanding of the responsibilities related to exercising democracy.

In the short term, the Organizing Committee believes that Québec's democratic institutions should be the preferred place where citizens can communicate and work with their government to build a society that reflects their vision of life.

Medium term, the Organizing Committee is convinced that it will be necessary to find the means to upgrade our democratic institutions permanently and not every 10, 20 or 100 years.

In the long term, the Organizing Committee believes that Québec must think about a change of political system. Electing the Premier by universal suffrage is a prime illustration of the citizens' wish to participate more actively in the processes that lead to decisions with consequences for the lives of people and communities.

With regard to the schedule for reform, the Organizing Committee agrees with the opinion of the majority of citizens about establishing the priorities for change. In the minds of the Organizing Committee, however, setting priorities does not stand in the way of taking short, medium and long term action.

PRIORITIES

A priority based change process is an effective way of grasping the nature and the complexity of the links between planning changes and the possible effects of such changes. Working on one aspect of reform in a single democratic institution almost certainly has a domino effect on other elements to be reformed in other institutions.

The Organizing Committee presents the priorities for change in the interest of maintaining an overall view and identifying the interrelations that might help set up a realistic schedule so that the desired reforms are a success.

Overhauling voting procedures

Citizens say time and again that the most urgent reform, because it is the most significant to expression of the people's sovereignty, is overhauling the voting procedures. If there were only one reform, it would be that.

The citizens find it essential and of the highest priority that their will be respected, that Québec move toward true men-women equity in politics, that Québec's diversity be reflected in our democratic institutions and that the importance of the regions be acknowledged.

Existing voting procedures are seen as obsolete. They are perceived as an obstacle to bringing citizen hopes into line with the evolution of democratic institutions.

Introducing elements of direct democracy

The citizens also feel some urgency with regard to new democratic spaces and introducing elements of direct democracy into democratic practices. They hope to have more influence on political power, feel concretely the effect of their contribution as citizens and exercise their sovereignty as a people.

Changing the political system to adapt it to Québec's current and future realities

The appropriateness of changing our political system is acknowledged by all citizens. Knowledge of the mechanics of this change and related choices are topics of concern, if not uneasiness. The citizens want to be sure that a change as fundamental overhauling the political system is not off the cuff or improvized. They want to know the pros and cons. They want to be stakeholders in the change. This is why they demand to be involved, in varying degrees, in the planning, awareness-raising, consultation, discussion and implementation of a new political system that is adapted to Québec's current and future realities.

Implementing formal processes for regional participation in government and National Assembly decisions

The relationship between the dynamics of Québec's 17 administrative regions and the functioning of our democratic institutions concerns the great majority of the people and groups consulted throughout the province. This concern is a major issue in our democratic life. Questions touching on the organization and functioning of our institutions must be dealt with after a decision has been taken about the place of the regions in the exercise of democracy.

Introducing measures designed to respond to the different expectations of citizens

Among the latest emerging expectations, the participation of women in our democratic institutions is the highest priority. The issues surrounding male/female parity as well as the appropriateness and strictness of the measures to put in place to encourage women's involvement in politics are the crux of the question.

Representation of Québec's ethnocultural diversity also appears to be a growing challenge and concern for many of our fellow citizens.

Topics such as a voting age of 16, the electoral map and integrating Internet technology into democratic culture are other emerging concerns among the population.

Involving the First Nations in the functioning of democracy in Québec

A very broad consensus becomes evident when the question is raised of involving the First Nations in the democratic life of Québec. The consensus is to establish the necessary links between native peoples' representatives and the Québec State to further the common interest of both communities.

CONCLUSION

In defining our position, the Organizing Committee shares the citizens' clearly expressed interest in focusing on social values that are rooted in the sovereignty of the people and government efficiency when reforming our democratic institutions.

This is why the vision of the changes to be made touches first on reviewing voting procedures followed by introducing elements of direct democracy; after that come changes to the political system to adapt it to Québec's current and future realities, the introduction of formal processes for regional participation in government and National Assembly decisions, and the implementation of measures to respond to the new expectations of citizens.

A strategic analysis to launch the great adventure of reforming our democratic institutions seems imminent to the Organizing Committee. Indeed, the very nature of such reform dictates special judgment with regard to the rhythm and sequencing of the changes to be applied.

In the third part of this report, we will deal with the recommendations that arise from the position and vision we have just discussed and with their effects on the citizen participation that the *Organizing Committee wishes to place at the heart of Québec's democratic institutions!*

PART THREE

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MAKING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION THE HEART OF QUÉBEC'S DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

The Organizing Committee's first challenge was to make sure it clearly understood the citizens' point of view about their democratic institutions. The second major challenge was to propose realistic elements of reform that would satisfy Québecers' democratic aspirations.

However, all changes not being equal, the Organizing Committee, in agreement with the citizens consulted, encourages the government and all of the political parties to consider ***changing current voting procedures*** as a sociopolitical priority. This reform is considered of primary importance since voting procedures must, in our democratic world, reflect Québec's reality, which is not currently the case.

On the other hand, the current context of globalization requires certain adaptations to our democratic institutions. These are a source of concern for the citizens, who do not feel they are sufficiently involved in these choices. In this respect, they are demanding the introduction of ***elements of direct democracy*** in order to have new means of exercising their influence and having greater control over government decisions that affect their lives as individuals and the life of their community, and that have consequences for future generations.

The Organizing Committee has established a number of ***adjustments to our political system*** that are designed to mitigate the most glaring lacks in our democracy. We note here changes that are designed to solidify the separation of executive and legislative powers, the suggestion of implementing a presidential-type system, setting elections at a fixed date, improving the nominating procedure, the functioning of parliamentary committees, restructuring of the role of MNAs and creating a Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy and Regional Councils on Citizenship and Democracy.

On the other hand, the reform of our democratic institutions is inevitably confronted with the dynamics of the relationship between the regions of Québec and the State. The Organizing Committee encourages a speedy resolution of this problem that has existed for many years and that entails major issues not only for the development of Québec but also for democracy itself. An approach involving a ***decentralization of powers***, based on specific regional agreements, is favoured to encourage regional participation in the decisions of the government and the National Assembly.

Citizen consultation at last has allowed a better understanding of ***Québecers' new expectations*** as well as bringing to light various hopes that are emerging from within the life of our community. The Organizing Committee proposes some answers to these new expectations: for example, measures that promote equal representation for men and women in our democratic institutions, mechanisms for preparing the next generation to participate, ways of advancing the participation of ethnocultural communities, a plan of reconciliation designed to have the First Nations take part in the democratic functioning of Québec and information and training programs in civic life.

1. AMENDING VOTING PROCEDURES

Amending voting procedures has been a topic of discussion in Québec for a very long time. Recently, debate has been brought back to the table through the mobilization of citizen groups (*Mouvement Démocratie nouvelle, Collectif Féminisme et Démocratie, CSN, etc.*) and through promises by the political parties on the issue. This debate was also at the heart of the Estates General on the Reform of Democratic Institutions.

The citizens definitely want changes to the existing voting procedures. The great majority of the people and organized bodies heard spoke to us about their frustration and their disillusionment with respect to the lack of weight of their votes.

On the other hand, if voting procedures are a mechanism for allocating seats, they must above all reflect a society's principles and values. Asked about the objectives that they wish to attain by implementing a new type of voting procedure, those consulted named four, and very clearly. They hope for:

- A better relationship between total votes and their representation as seats.
- Maintenance of the voter-MNA link.
- Political pluralism (the admission of new parties into the National Assembly).
- Effective representation of the regions.

The preoccupation with equal representation for men and women is the backdrop to thoughts on voting procedures. A similar approach is seen among the ethnocultural communities who hope for the opportunity to be better represented following amendments to voting procedures. Last, all citizens are concerned about the stability of the State with respect to the choice of new voting procedures.

This said, after analysis of numerous voting procedures from all over the world, it appears to be very difficult to create one that responds fully to all of these desires. There are choices to make.

The Organizing Committee feels that the citizens clearly express the will to amend current voting procedures in favour of proportional voting procedures. If there were only one reform to make, it would be this.

The Organizing Committee acknowledges that in Québec there seems to be a significant trend among many citizens as well as among the political parties in favour of compensatory voting procedures, which are voting procedures where, for example, 75 MNAs are elected by majority vote and 50 are elected by list.

The Organizing Committee grants that this might be an interesting hypothesis for Québec. However, our preference is more in favour of the model of regional proportionality. In fact, we consider that this model allows citizens to engage in thorough debate and, ultimately, to permit Québec to develop in accordance with the objectives expressed by the voice of the citizens as well as in keeping with the evolution of the realities of Québec in a context of decentralization. The Organizing Committee is sensitive to the importance of maintaining the link between the citizens and their MNAs. We are of the opinion that regional proportionality better offers the opportunity to redefine this link.

To ensure the success of the reform of our institutions, the Organizing Committee considers that it is essential to include the various anticipated changes in an overall vision of the Québec of today and in a perspective of the Québec of tomorrow. By doing this, it will be easier for Québecers to better understand the sequence of the changes and to participate more actively in the ongoing and democratic life of their institutions.

With this in mind, adopting voting procedures that give the regions proportional representation[1] seems to the Organizing Committee to the best way to succeed in:

- Instituting a new relationship of confidence with our elected representatives by, among other things, restructuring the role of the MNA.
- Advancing regional participation in the decisions of the government and the National Assembly.
- Giving greater weight to the votes of the citizens of Québec.
- Encouraging pluralism in politics.

This model establishes a different relationship with MNAs since the regions would be represented by as many MNAs as there are currently electoral districts in a single region. Therefore, the base of representation would be broader and reflect regional size. MNAs would no longer represent only part of a region, but the whole region. This model ensures that all votes count. It opens the door to a larger number of political currents, except in regions that would have few MNAs (say, a minimum of three MNAs). On the other hand, regions that currently have five to eight MNAs would be easier for the parties to access. In other words, the model by definition constitutes a "regional" system, which would bring voters to abandon the long tradition of counting on only one MNA.

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the government take note of the firm popular desire to amend current voting procedures by presenting Québecers the opportunity to adopt by referendum, before the end of the first half of the next term of government, voting procedures that accord the regions proportional representation, meaning that:

- **The National Assembly is made up of 125 MNAs elected in regional ridings.**
- **Ridings should be made up of the 15 existing administrative regions, plus Montréal divided into four ridings, and Québec City into two ridings.**
- **Each region and each party presents a slate of candidates that contains the number of MNAs to be elected (for example, five in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, as is currently the case).**

1. Visit Web site www.democratie-nouvelle.qc.ca

- **The voting method is called panachage. Thus, in a region electing five MNAs, voters have five choices that they make as they wish from all of the slates presented (without necessarily taking into account the order set by the parties).**

(One member of the Organizing Committee recorded dissent on this recommendation.)

2. INTRODUCING ELEMENTS OF DIRECT DEMOCRACY

Direct democracy is a subject that is discussed increasingly in all sectors of society. We were able to note that this concept can be easily manipulated. In this respect, the Organizing Committee is in agreement with all of the citizens who both wish to implement elements of direct democracy and call for caution in applying them. These calls for discretion with regard to framing measures are intended to promote government efficiency and ensure political stability.

Bearing this in mind, allow us to point out that it is important to adopt *fundamental laws* that permit implementation of the elements of direct democracy desired by all citizens.

2.1 Adopting fundamental laws

The Organizing Committee proposes integrating a new tool into the democratic world of Québec: a procedure for the adoption of fundamental laws by the people. The intended goal is to give more meaning to *popular sovereignty*, more power to citizens and more power to the votes they express.

In fact, fundamental laws help to solidify the concept of the *voting constituent and the elected representative*, and to allow voters to decide for themselves what mandate they grant to their representatives.

In the spirit of democracy, these laws ensure that citizens decide for themselves which laws are fundamental, those laws that establish the form of government, define the relationships between the governing and the governed and lay down the distribution of powers.

In doing so, Québec would move closer to all of the countries that have adopted the constitutional procedure generally accepted in democratic federations, that of requiring that the fundamental laws of a country and its voters be adopted or amended by the people during a referendum, and that the said laws be integrated into what is called a Constitution.[2]

In Canada, British Columbia is the only province to have adopted a constitution following a referendum. In the United States, each of the 50 states has its own constitution. The same is true for each of the 22 Swiss cantons, each of the 15 German Länder and each of the 6 Australian states.

2. As defined by the Larousse dictionary

The Organizing Committee considers that adopting the *Constitution of Québec* is an essential action that will encourage the growth of democracy in Québec by enlarging the sphere of consciousness and the breadth of the understanding of democratic procedures, thus allowing citizens to assume their rights and responsibilities with greater maturity.

RECOMMENDATION 2

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That all measures relating to the form of government, the relationship between the governing and the governed and with respect to the organization of our democratic institutions be included in a fundamental law, voted in by the National Assembly and in confirmation of the decision of the people expressed during a referendum.

That the fundamental laws be assembled in a Québec constitution, such constitution having to be approved or amended by a majority of the citizens during a referendum.

2.2 Introducing mechanisms of popular initiative

Popular initiative is the meeting place between a group that proposes and the sovereign people who decide. This is why, in order to bring citizens closer to their democratic institutions, it seems necessary to establish the right of *popular initiative*, a recognized semi-direct democratic procedure.

This procedure is part of the view of the voter-representative relationship. As is recognized at election time, voters can reserve certain rights; the *popular initiative* procedure allows citizens to reserve the right to have a say over certain laws before they are adopted.

In some legislatures, the government agrees, in accordance with a fundamental law, to submit for popular approval certain measures that it proposes. In other cases, popular approval becomes compulsory upon demand by the citizens themselves, who can require the adoption, amendment or abrogation of a law.

The *popular initiative* procedure can be direct or semi-direct. In the first case, the proposal submitted by a fixed number of citizens set by law is put directly to the vote and, if approved, becomes law. In the second case, the initiative is first submitted to the legislative assembly, which decides whether or not to proceed according to the proposal. If the assembly refuses, the proposal is decided by the voters.

We note here that, at the beginning of the last century, there were a few attempts in Canada to implement mechanisms of popular initiative that came to no result. More recently, in 1991 the Government of British Columbia adopted a law concerning the popular initiative mechanism, which is still in effect. Such laws are also in effect in some US states, using various approaches. As such, in North Dakota a petition with 10,000 signatures, 10% of voters in Nevada and 3% of registered voters in Ohio can start the procedure that ends in a vote by the people.

The Organizing Committee considers that introducing popular initiative will favourably influence democratic culture in Québec. In fact, applied to the needs of Québec, these initiatives would allow citizens to rally around the questions and issues that they feel are important for their individual and community lives. They would also have the feeling of contributing concretely to the protection of higher interests and the development of Québec.

The Organizing Committee also considers that popular initiative measures could contribute significantly to raising the quality of the exercise of democracy in municipal and school bodies.

RECOMMENDATION 3

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the National Assembly adopt a law recognizing the citizen right to *popular initiative*.

3. CHANGING THE POLITICAL SYSTEM

3.1 Solidifying the separation of executive and legislative powers

A democratic political system, beyond the forces at work on the level of society, is made up of four components assembled within the concept of the State; these are the power of the legislature, the power of the executive, the power of the judiciary and public administrations.

It is interesting to note that a majority believes that the State functions more efficiently when the following conditions are met:

- Citizens are better informed and know their rights with respect to the functioning of their democratic institutions.
- The legislative, executive and judiciary can play their roles fully, each assuming its responsibilities absolutely and freely without the interference of another power.
- Recourse to the necessary authority is assured.

This being said, our consultation revealed that according to the majority of citizens, the current system of parliamentary tradition encourages a substantial concentration of power in the hands of the executive. Despite the assertion that, according to this system the National Assembly and the government exercise real power, they remark that in reality the separation of power (particularly between the executive and the legislative) is very slight, and some even consider it not to exist. This, to a great extent, explains the rupture between the governing and the governed.

A large majority of citizens are calling for a more solid separation of power because, according to them, the current parliamentary system encourages too great a concentration of power in the hands of the executive, since the government not only governs but also decides on the laws to present to the National Assembly. It also controls adoption of them by imposing party discipline in the name of government stability. In this way, the heavy concentration of power creates a chasm between the governing and the governed that results in closed, authoritarian governance. Consequently, they demand changes to the existing political system.

The Organizing Committee shares this perception held by the majority of citizens. Even more so since, according to the experts, no principle has more crucial importance in the democratic ideal than that of limiting the State, which must respect fundamental human rights. Modern democracy is largely inspired by this rule of limiting the power of the State since the greatest enemy of democracy in the last century was totalitarianism and, to combat it, nothing is of higher importance than recognizing the limits of the power of the State.[3]

These days, the democratic ideal of the 20th century is undergoing a true upheaval: this concept asserted the connection between individual will and the will of society, meaning the State. Today, we are defending the opposite view and seek rather to protect the freedom of individuals and groups against the all-powerful State. Here, in other words, is what the citizens recalled to the mind of the Organizing Committee during the consultations. They reiterated to us the importance of reacting to the concentration of power in the hands of the government executive.

The Organizing Committee thought long and hard about what measures to entrench in the existing political system, the parliamentary system, and states that the answer lies less in establishing new rules than in a change of mentality. It lies also, in great part, in the attitude and method of wielding power of the persons who hold the position of premier. Should those persons wish to, they may truly act like monarchs: they have, through the power they exercise over their ministers (particularly the power to name them or remove them) and over caucus, the last word. On the other hand, if they feel that they are leaders of a democratic institution and themselves state the rules by which they share their powers with their teams, they can, without changing any of the democratic institutions, initiate open and participatory governance. They can themselves, by exercising their power, set healthy limits to them, to the powers of the government and play up the powers of the legislative assembly.

Given the importance of the issue, the Organizing Committee is proposing that various measures to ensure a more solid separation of executive and legislative powers be implemented within the current parliamentary system.

3. Alain Touraine, *Qu'est-ce que la démocratie*, Fayard, 1994.

RECOMMENDATION 4

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That voluntary changes be brought to the relationships between executive and legislative powers in order that the separation of power between the government and the National Assembly be more solid so as to create an open and participatory type of governance.

3.2 Fixed date elections

If ever there were a time when the random setting of elections was perceived as a sign of wisdom on the part of the premier who first took into account the interests of the population, we can certainly say that things have changed. In fact, for a strong majority of citizens, this exercise is now understood to be a strategic weapon that premiers use for purely partisan political ends.

The Organizing Committee took this widespread perception into account and noted the injurious effects it has on the health of democracy. Moreover, the Organizing Committee considers that the strongest argument in favour of fixed-date elections is that it sets for every citizen, for groups and for Québec bodies the same political calendar. This disposition would encourage debate on the proposed political platforms, on the performance of the incumbent government and on citizen mobilization around the expectations and requirements that the citizens want to propose during the set election campaign.

Remember that in Canada, the government of British Columbia adopted in 2001 a law setting the date of the next election for May 17, 2005 and, after that on the second Tuesday of May every four years. At the municipal level, Québec already holds elections on fixed dates.

The Committee recommends a set period of four years based on the opinion of the citizens for whom a five-year period is too long, on the current British Columbia law and on the trends seen in other provinces or countries.

Finally, the Committee underscores that the law must provide for some exceptions: the overturning of the government following a confidence vote and the death or incapacity of the premier to act.

In the first case, according to certain laws, governments overturned less than a year before the date of elections may remain in place. Otherwise, elections must be held within the time frame prescribed by law, and a new period of four years begins starting from the date of the election of the new government.

In the second case, it can be provided for that, in the event of the death or incapacity of the premier, the deputy premier succeeds to the position. Or again, it may be that the National Assembly is called on to elect the new head of government.

RECOMMENDATION 5

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That a law be adopted setting elections for the month of May, every four years, at a date determined by the government.

3.3 Appointments, parliamentary committees . . .

The Organizing Committee deplores the fact that a large number of citizens believe strongly: that appointments within democratic bodies are remote-controlled on a partisan basis only; that parliamentary committees are fake exercises; that the government systematically bypasses the National Assembly in preparing laws, in issuing directives or regulations directly to the ministries; that the voice of the citizen is worthless because the government makes agreements only with businesses, corporations, unions and pressure groups.

Parliamentary committees should go to the citizens rather than obliging citizens to come to them. The province of Québec is vast and distance from Québec City is an obstacle to accessing parliamentary committees. Therefore, in some cases committees should travel.

Citizens should be able to appear before a parliamentary committee without expense and the requirements for producing briefs should be loosened; in addition, hearing schedules should be adapted to the availability of the citizens and not the reverse.

The Organizing Committee considers it essential to maintain the credibility of Québec's democratic institutions. The same is true for these institutions' legitimacy and for public confidence that rights and responsibilities will be respected.

RECOMMENDATION 6

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That appointments to senior management positions within the machinery of government and paragovernmental bodies, excepting those that are already provided for by law, not be the exclusive privilege of the premier but rather, upon recommendation by the premier, approved by the National Assembly following examination and recommendation by a parliamentary committee.

That the parliamentary committees, in theory open to all, be more concretely so by taking into account the contingencies of each mandate with respect to the costs and expenses related to carrying out the mandate.

3.4 The role of the MNA:

The accounts heard revealed a real polarization with regard to the local dimension of the role of MNAs in response to the technical and material problems, more or less urgent, in their ridings and of the people in their communities as well as concerning their role as legislators within the National Assembly. The general opinion is that this tension is probably inevitable since MNAs are people who assume various responsibilities. In effect, MNAs represent, inform, educate, lead, assemble, organize and pass laws.

With regard to this, the Organizing Committee was able to observe the rift that exists between the perceptions of the citizens and the perceptions of MNAs with respect to the priorities that MNAs choose for accomplishing their tasks. Definitely, citizens do not feel that they are generally among the highest priorities of their MNAs.

One of the main citizen frustrations comes from MNAs' absolute conformity to party discipline. This argument is certainly one of the most frequently raised to explain the rift that is deepening between the government and the citizens, between political society and civil society.

At first thought, the Organizing Committee's perception of party discipline is positive. It can support ethical behaviour and solidarity toward a program and toward a team. However, when party discipline is perceived as an *order from the boss* to MNAs to vote against their conscience and against the opinion of their constituents, it is no longer within the realm of political ethics. This is why the practice of party discipline in the business of the legislature deserves to be amended to be clear and precise.

Incidentally, the issues that were so often raised to the Organizing Committee on the role of political parties and the recurrence of negative remarks heard on the subject make one stop and wonder about the contradiction that such organizations appear at the same time to be the centre of the democratic process and the black sheep of democracy.

Four our part, the Organizing Committee is not questioning the type of voluntary and collective commitment by citizens within our political life that parties represent. We recognize that many of the great changes that have occurred in our society were created, structured and brought into being by political parties.

However, the Organizing Committee considers that questions should be asked of political parties and, with an eye to maintaining a healthy democracy, corrective measures should be applied to certain practices. The whole of parliamentary tradition and its culture of systematically putting the opposition party off on the wrong foot, made worse by broadcasting the debates, have brought about a loss of ground and a cheapening of political culture. The way that parties treat each other and react to each other, contributes to the deterioration the value of political life in the public eye. Awareness campaigns, better political education and, eventually, greater diversity of currents and opinions on the political scene are by nature elements that will improve this political culture.

In spite of their sometimes very sour criticisms, the citizens we met nonetheless state that they are very aware of the scope of the responsibilities that their MNAs assume. For their part, MNAs bring up the diversity of their tasks: protecting the interests of their ridings, handling local development and other files, informing their fellow citizens, interfacing between the population and the government, taking part in debates in the National Assembly and the demands of life in a political party.

For our part, the Organizing Committee wishes to express our admiration and sympathy for these people who assume, day after day, for many hours a week, the indispensable and complex function of MNA. We also deplore the fact that MNAs are often the targets of criticisms related to situations where policy is inadequate in the current context, but of which they are not the cause or, at the least, not the only cause.

The Organizing Committee believes that it is important to underscore the increasingly broad, changing and complex context in which MNAs work. In the midst of the tensions between globalization and local development, in the face of the intensifying of the law of the market on all sides and its demands for flexibility and mobility, the role of politics is changing, its places of function are fluid and MNAs have to adjust, revise their role and their relationship to their home ground, our democratic institutions and political power. They must form a network, come to an agreement and interact with groups of citizens and the organizations within civil society. They can no longer be content to be merely the mouthpiece for a local point of view.

By virtue of the larger political view that their presence at the centre of power gives them, MNAs must especially take on the responsibility of acting as advance men to communicate to their fellow citizens and their other partners opportunities for development as well as the threats to those opportunities.

With this in mind, the Organizing Committee, like the citizens we heard, believes that it would be advisable and useful to establish strict and systematic accountability measures respecting the mandates of our elected representatives. This activity would simultaneously allow for demystifying certain perceptions, taking a responsible view of the public business concerning elected representatives and appreciating the work they do for their fellow citizens.

For all of these reasons, the Organizing Committee is of the opinion that, out of respect for the people who put themselves at the service of their peers and in the interest of the health of democracy in Québec, it is crucial to reform elected representation as a democratic institution.

RECOMMENDATION 7

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the government proceed with a study for the purpose of restructuring the role of the MNA and that a committee made up of MNAs be part of this process.

That, twice during the course of their terms, each MNA organize a meeting with their fellow citizens in their ridings for purposes of accountability, exchange and orientation.

That all MNAs be able to vote on all issues so as to accommodate the will of their voters during any debate in the National Assembly except:

a) **When a confidence vote is presented against the government. For this purpose, it must be understood that rejection of draft legislation does not constitute a vote of non-confidence against the government.**

b) **When it involves draft legislation to follow up on formal and precise commitments publicized during the preceding election campaign, such commitments being clearly announced as binding on party discipline.**

c) **When it involves budget or financial legislation.**

That all MNAs be able to vote on all issues so as to accommodate the will of their voters. For this purpose, it is recommended that the laws be amended as needed so as to recognize that legislation proposed by the government is reputed not to be a vote of confidence or of non-confidence against the government, except in the case of a previously announced vote of non-confidence or in the case of budget laws or legislation touching on finance.

3.5 Parliamentary or presidential system?

The few measures proposed above will certainly not be enough to satisfy the majority that wishes a limitation of the powers of the executive and a strengthening of the power of the legislature. On the other hand, they will serve to show that such measures are rather limited in parliamentary-type systems.

Two avenues remain open: be content that the sovereignty of government is unavoidable or necessary, or push on to study systems that are based on presidential types. In short, not copy a system from elsewhere, but adopt a system that is particular to Québec. In doing this, the desire expressed by the majority of citizens would be respected, even more so since they are demanding a more solid separation between the executive and the legislative. They expressed a strong desire to elect the premier by universal suffrage (a

result of 83% of the participants in the consultations), as well as to choose ministers who are not representatives, both measures inspired by presidential-type systems. For the majority of citizens, this type of government, made up of ministers chosen from among the population, meets the needs for the competence and efficiency of a government like Québec's, particularly in the context of globalization and contemporary life. In addition, many people would like the election of MNAs to be separate from that of the premier, seeing this as a means of freeing MNAs of party discipline.

The Organizing Committee believes that we must push forward with the study of a new political system for Québec. In effect, this is because, in the comparative studies, presidential-type systems stand apart from parliamentary systems in that they are a form of democratic government where the executive and legislative powers are separate, independent and elected separately, which the majority of participants in the consultation- and nearly half of those who took part in the Estates General-want.

Obviously, these are measure that lead to sweeping changes. In short, it would mean moving to a system of a type that is very different from that we have known for so long, meaning a presidential-type system within a constitutional monarchy and within a federation of States under the increasing authority of a central government.

This reality raises a number of questions. Indeed, many people qualify their answers when asked if they would rather have a system inspired by a presidential tradition than a parliamentary-type system. Some state that they are resolutely opposed. Others are more questioning and encourage caution, citing examples where the concentration of powers would be just as strong in systems where the head of state is elected by universal suffrage.

The Organizing Committee is of the opinion that the issue deserves to be delved into by a committee made up of non-parliamentarians selected on the basis of their skill in creating new political systems rather than their ability to codify what has been done in the past. In other words, assemble those citizens who are likely to put into relation a good dose of creativity, realism and attentiveness to the needs of the citizens while keeping in sight the establishment of an open and participatory type of governance. Already, in the current system, governance can become more open and appear less authoritarian and closed by listening more attentively to citizens (which includes the necessity of creating spaces where they can express themselves), by giving them more direct powers of participation and by making our democratic institutions more accessible, as said previously.

In addition, this desire for change is accompanied by the hope that the functioning of the State as a business adapted to contemporary life be reviewed. Young people in particular ask that, in the context of progress in the sciences, management and information technology and communications, that the functioning of our democratic institutions be reviewed, especially those related to the process of adopting laws and managing the business of the State, as well as the rules of governance of paragovernmental corporations.

However, according to the Organizing Committee, we must go farther.

RECOMMENDATION 8

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That, in addition to creating an open and participatory type of governance within the existing political system, the government award to an independent group of non-parliamentarians made up in the majority by citizens, the task of studying in greater depth the appropriateness and feasibility of a system that would allow the citizens to:

- **Elect heads of government by universal suffrage so that they might form their governments by appointing ministers not necessarily from among the members of the National Assembly, these ministers as well as the heads of government not being part of the national Assembly.**

- **Elect the members of the National Assembly by separate vote.**

- **That this committee also study the measures needed to modernize the process relative to adopting laws, the functioning of our democratic institutions, the management of the business of the State and the rules of governance of Crown corporations in the context of contemporary life and progress in technology and communications and transmission of data and information.**

4. IMPLEMENTING A QUÉBEC COUNCIL ON CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY AND REGIONAL COUNCILS ON CITIZENSHIP AND DEMOCRACY

The public consultation by the Organizing Committee created among those who took part a marked interest in favour of creating democratic spaces in order to freely exchange, receive non-partisan information and learn mutually about citizenship and democracy, and better face the complexity of *living together*.

At the end of the Estates General, the participants accepted unanimously to create in each of their regions a regional council of citizens in hopes of creating this type of democratic space in their milieus, of taking stock regularly of the functioning of their political and democratic institutions both provincially as well as on the municipal and school levels with a view to creating a closer tie to their MNAs in order that MNAs keep them informed of the activities of the government and their representatives. All, we repeat, in a non-partisan spirit.

These councils would be made up of citizens whose initial nucleus would be the group that took part in the recent Estates General and came from every region of Québec. These would be Regional Councils on Citizenship and Democracy.

To head this network of citizen councils, 80% of participants favoured establishing a Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy, or a committee of citizens responsible for permanently monitoring the quality of democratic life in Québec. Creation of this council would thus respond to all of those who hoped that consultations in the image of those of last fall are repeated regularly, every two years for example, in all regions of Québec in order to listen to Québec's citizens and receive their suggestions and proposals before making a report to the National Assembly and formulating recommendations for it.

The council would also respond in part to the citizens who demanded, in the face of influence from the media-which is definitely an important machine in democratic life-the creation of a democracy watch responsible for measuring the extension of this influence, ensuring that it is monitored and making reports to the State bodies.

Finally, for many, the Auditor General's task of monitoring government management should be extended to the political system. With respect to this, the Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy could collaborate and contribute to the work of the Auditor General.

The citizens insist that this council maintain its independence from government and from interest groups. To do this, council members should not assume any position within political parties or paragovernmental organizations and political institutions. In addition, the members of the board of directors of the council would be volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION 9

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the government create the Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy, independent from partisan politics, and whose responsability would be to permanently monitor the quality and development of democratic life in Québec through research and citizen consultations, and appoint its first chairperson for a term of one year. This council will be made up of representatives named by each of the regional councils composed of volunteers from each administrative region, starting from the second year the council's chairperson being chosen from among and by the members of the council.

4.1 Implementing formal processes for regional participation in government and National Assembly decisions

The Organizing Committee considers that the insistent demand for the decentralization of powers to the regions is of prime importance for the reform of Québec's democratic institutions. It is the riddle of the chicken and the egg.

The regions are Québec. They are the places and the space where the people who live agree to call themselves *citizens* and assume responsibility for them. The regions build Québec society day after day. Assembled under a common government, the Québec State, the regions develop, share and build Québecers' vision of society.

The relationship between the regions and the government of Québec based on a Québec vision of society is founded on an agreement of governance designed to protect the common good of Québecers, advance their higher interests and promote the community's social, political and economic development. It appears that this relationship is currently neither clear enough nor consensual enough in the eyes of the majority of citizens, all regions included.

The Organizing Committee finds that the notions of *regional governments, senate or House of Regions* raise profound questions that remain unanswered for lack of the power to define and state the terms of the contract that establishes the relationship between the Québec government and the regions of the entire province.

Québec is divided into administrative regions. However, regarding the question of the future and power of the regions, we most often refer to the regions that are outlying or far from large centres. That said, these rural or *resource* regions contemplate balanced representation in the National Assembly. The rules of the game make it so that some regions are over-represented. Which, incidentally, prompted the Chambre de commerce de Montréal in its brief to the Organizing Committee to demand an upward adjustment in representation and a review of the electoral map.

Listening to the citizens, it seems that the desired goal of the *inhabitants of the regions* is above all that the regions be considered as important partners in the development of the whole of Québec. Since representation that is equitable, and even too high according to some, has not given the regions the power they demanded, the solution does not lie in increased representation.

To make the regions partners in developing Québec, some people suggest abolishing ridings as we know them today and establishing regional ridings. This way, MNAs would no longer be the representatives of only one riding but of a region. In other words, all of the MNAs who previously represented the ridings in a region would also have the mandate to defend the interest of not only a part of the regions, but all of it.

Other people believe rather in establishing a *house of legislature*, parallel to the National Assembly, where each of the regions, including Québec City and Montréal, would be represented equally. For example, there would be two representatives per region, Montréal being divided into four regions. This way, all of the regions regardless of their

size would be invited to work together to develop all of Québec. However, the majority rejects the idea of adding new structures.

Others, finally, suggest instead establishing strong regional governments whose elected representatives would have to be accountable to their voters with respect to powers exercised directly over regional development, primary and secondary education-today under the direction of school boards-and, according to some, first-line health care. This would result in the cancellation of unconvincing and marginally democratic elections, considering the level of participation. For many it is a question of an efficient way of making these regions partners in the development of Québec, for all that means a real decentralization based on the confidence of the central government in the regional representatives.

Finally, given the urgency to act and the difficulty to harmonize the different needs of the regions, a good number of people suggest accelerating the decentralization of powers to the regions according to special agreements that would have to be negotiated with each of them in compliance with existing benefits. This solution would have the advantage of not creating new structures, but rather using existing structures.

The Organizing Committee is of the opinion that this last avenue is the one most likely to attain the desired goal in the short term.

RECOMMENDATION 10

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the government accelerate the decentralization of powers to the regions in order to make them true partners in the development of Québec, based on agreements to be concluded with each of them.

5. INTRODUCING MEASURES DESIGNED TO RESPOND TO THE DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS OF THE CITIZENS

The briefs and the comments gathered during the hearings and the Estates General are bursting with very original and creative ideas, remarks and proposals touching on various expectations of citizens interested by all of the dimensions of democratic life. Some topics are more marginal than others, and we see in them the emergence of movements that will see the light of day some time in the future. On the other hand, some concerns are systematically brought up again and again by many actors and from different angles.

The participation of women and their representation in the political world are without a doubt the most recurring subject in the expression of the various citizen expectations.

Among the other concerns most frequently raised are: preparation of the next generation to participate as citizens, representation of ethnocultural communities within our democratic institutions, consciousness-raising and citizen training in the schools, citizen groups and political parties, creation of new democratic spaces, carrying out information campaigns on exercising democracy, travelling speakers, spaces reserved for work on democracy and meetings on themes related to citizen participation in all of the libraries throughout the province of Québec. Certain elements of information technology and communications could also promote the exercise of democracy: electronic voting, communications and discussion forums with elected representatives as well as interactive regional government portals. In addition, implementing mobile polling stations would be something that would encourage cegep and university students to vote.

5.1 The participation and representation of women in our democratic institutions

The Organizing Committee is able to confirm the broad consensus of Québecers on the necessity of women and men having the democratic ability to make up their government equally. The citizens affirm that they are equally at ease with voting for one or the other sex, if they are equally competent. We might thus believe that there is no further obstacle to equal representation of men and women in the National Assembly. However, the fact is otherwise. If mentalities have changed, we cannot say as much for the rules of access to political power.

The Organizing Committee considers that the lag between the citizens' openness of mind and the level of difficulty that women who chose to go into political life deserves our concern for the enrichment and greater justice of democracy.

In theory, each citizen is equal in a democracy. However, the road toward this ideal is travelled slowly and there is still a long way to go. At the start, democratic rights were recognized only for property owners. Then, in succession, it was men of the age of majority, women and young people. Everyone has attained the right to vote and the right to hold the various offices in our democratic institutions. The theory was sound, but the reality was another story since democracy does not consist solely of the right to chose our representatives. Democracy also means having equal access to the different democratic institutions and even to be elected to them.

Because of the historical role reserved for men, women are not equally represented in democratic bodies. Men are generally more available to step into these functions. Thus over time, men have imposed their ways of doing things on political bodies. This said, women have not been able to exercise the same influence on political bodies since historically they have not enjoyed the same opportunities as men. In addition, they generally do not have the same financial means. Besides this, the management methods imposed by men were not well suited to women's way of thinking and acting.

In Québec, 21 years went by between the time women were given the right to vote and the election of the first female MNA, Claire Kirkland-Casgrain. Since this time, the place of women has increased significantly. At present, a quarter of Québec MNAs are women and some of them hold major responsibilities in Cabinet and the National Assembly.

In spite of this progress, there are many who would like to play the full role they are entitled to in our democracy. In a healthy and vigorous democracy, women should contribute to debates, decision-making and, more broadly, to community governance, as much at the State level as in regional, municipal and school bodies. It is an issue of equity and a guarantee of increased richness for our reflections and discussion on the orientations of the State. Also, reconciling work-family-politics necessitates that concrete incentive measures be set up so that women can act and develop as easily as men in the political arena.

The Organizing Committee was able to note that the political parties are often pointed out as the main hindrance to attaining male-female parity in politics. Women state that the selection criteria, the rules of functioning, the typically masculine values advanced are far from being an encouragement to join the ranks. These factors are rather perceived by women as an obstacle course that does not respect them enough and does not leave them the opportunity to compete sufficiently in Québec's political and democratic life.

The Organizing Committee considers that certain measures must be taken so as to encourage the political parties to even out the difficulties with which women who want to go into politics are confronted in order to promote the desired development of these milieus.

Women are not a group among other groups. Men and women are the two elements that make up and perpetuate democratic society. The Organizing Committee believes that the measures needed to make this a reality lie in the direction of allowing women, as is the case for men, to exercise their influence on their democratic institutions.

Nevertheless, by very definition, a living democracy recognizes not only equality with regard to voting, but also with regard to the opportunities to take part in the different decisional bodies of society. From this point of view, the Organizing Committee asserts that new steps must be taken with respect to women.

With this in mind, the Organizing Committee considers that a set of measures must be instituted in order to promote equal access for women to political power. The Organizing Committee has already suggested considering proportional voting procedures including an alternative list of men and women as an encouragement to the participation of women in politics.

RECOMMENDATION 11

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the government contribute to the creation of a private fund for the purpose of supporting women to enter politics.

That those political parties that, after a general election have at least 30% of women among their representatives, receive a reimbursement supplemented by its election expenses until they have attained 50% of women representatives.

That the *À égalité pour décider*[4] program be instated permanently and that its financial resources be increased. Moreover, a portion of the budget of this program should be reserved to support projects designed for native women as well as women from the different ethnocultural communities.

5.2 The place of young people in our democratic institutions

The questions relative to lowering the voting age sparked a lively debate within the Québec population. Some people consider that young people of age 16 are sufficiently mature to vote, as opposed to others who are older.

Democracy in Québec, as all democracies, evolves slowly when it comes to granting the right to vote. The age criterion has changed over time: first set at 35 years, it was then lowered to 25; in 1940, it was dropped to 21 and, in 1963, it was again lowered to 18 years.

The citizens consulted opted by 74% to maintain the right to vote at 18 years. Some people consider that younger people are not ready to vote or, again, that they have not attained the degree of maturity necessary to have the responsibility of voting. Other people raised the complex issue of the legal age of majority. Finally, the citizens stated that they were not ready to authorize a young man or woman of 16 to stand as a candidate for the position of MNA.

It is interesting to note that at the Estates General participants voted 42% in favour of lowering the voting age to 16 years. Nevertheless, 58% were opposed.

Consequently, the Organizing Committee considers that the positions are not clear enough on the issue and that it is appropriate to continue to think about it and look deeper into the potential effects. However, the Committee is of the opinion that it is suitable to immediately broach the subject of preparing young people to exercise their roles as citizens.

4. The "À égalité pour décider" program provides financial support to local and regional non-profit organizations that present projects focused on increasing the representation of women in responsible positions on local and regional bodies. Established in 1999, the program has an annual budget of one million dollars until 2007.

The Organizing Committee considers that it is important to take into consideration the culture of young people today with regard to initiatives to prepare citizen succession. In fact, these days, young people participate in various ways in socio-political life. The advent of globalization has mobilized them strongly since, according to them, it threatens the fundamental values of freedom and democracy that are part of their lives.

Among the values they hold strongly to are: male-female parity, sustainable development, solidarity, ethnocultural diversity and fairness. These are the intrinsic elements of *living together* that young people hold up and defend strongly. A majority of young people say they are not very attracted by partisan politics. However, they are very sensitive to the values of solidarity not only on the regional and provincial levels, but also, and perhaps above all, internationally.

From a certain protest in the face of globalization have been born different original initiatives such as the tendency to use electronic and traditional means to circulate information and make an opinion.

A majority of the young people consulted express their need to know in order to act. This extremely present need is often expressed in a tone of urgency. They wish to be prepared to take part in the debate and propose democratic solutions to the problems they perceive. They also consider that the current democratic institutions do not meet their expectations, which are very high, principally with respect to representation and participatory democracy. That is why the majority of them are in favour of fundamental changes to our institutions.

Many of them recall to mind that learning about life in a democracy ought to occur in the first place within the family and places frequented by young people through practice at activities that teach them about collective decision-making and democratic values.

Such initiatives exist already in many school environments and teaching establishments: school credit unions managed by students guided by a teacher, para-educational activities under student direction and including democratic-inspired decision-making, school consumer cooperatives and buyer groups (a network that is growing in Québec). This approach ensures, in addition to a better knowledge of our democratic institutions and how they function, a citizen education that is, in short, a learning experience in the complexity of *living together* in a democratic and pluralistic society such as ours.

In brief, above and beyond all it is important, as well as the theoretical and practical instruction already proposed in the educational reform under way, to develop a culture of democratic citizen participation among young people from a very young age by involving actors in civil society as much as from the public and para-public bodies of Québec society.

With respect to this, the Organizing Committee is of the opinion that exercises such as youth parliaments, political clubs, taking part in the functioning of sectoral or general student associations, and involvement in socio-community groups are all important learning experiences for the young people of Québec.

RECOMMENDATION 12

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That the voting age be maintained at 18.

That courses in citizenship and democratic life be included in the compulsory school curriculum from primary school up to college level.

That the development of practical training activities be encouraged and supported in the public and para-public structures as well as in the components of civil society, based on democratic values and individual responsibility, in which decision-making is collective.

5.3 The participation and representation of ethnocultural communities in our democratic institutions

The ethnocultural communities clearly express their desire to take part in Québec's democratic institutions. Throughout the province, the citizens consulted say they are open to this participation. Nevertheless, the fact is that despite the willingness and the efforts made until now, the cultural communities are under-represented in the majority of our institutions. The Organizing Committee felt called upon to respond by the size of the challenge raised by this impasse. Indeed, throughout our process, the Committee was concerned about the importance of our democratic institutions reflecting Québec's diversity, including ethnocultural diversity.

So it is with great satisfaction that the Organizing Committee states, at the end of our work, that the hopes of the ethnocultural communities converge entirely with the hopes of all of the citizens of Québec. In fact, it turns out that the Organizing Committee's recommendations satisfy the main demands of the ethnocultural communities: proportional voting procedures, decentralization of powers to the regions, training and education programs for the population in living as citizens, the invitation to the political parties to review their democratic practices (regarding the selection and training of their candidates as well as the standards that define their political culture).

The Organizing Committee considers that recommendations such as those concerning the introduction to elements of popular initiative, the creation of a Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy and Regional Councils on Citizenship and Democracy as well as the process of appointments to important positions within the government and paragovernmental bodies will contribute to our democratic institutions' better reflecting Québec's ethnocultural diversity.

Within the perspective of this important reform that is designed to give more power to the citizens, the Organizing Committee wishes to promote broader representation and greater participation by ethnocultural communities in our democratic institutions.

Like several of the participants in the Estates General, the Committee considers that in order to promote better representation of ethnocultural diversity within our democratic institutions it is appropriate to implement ways and means that allow a better ownership of Québec's vision of democracy. The Organizing Committee deems that these measures will work if they are linked to a clearer vision and discussion of a view of society in which diversity becomes a dimension of the make-up of Québec's identity.

RECOMMENDATION 13

The Organizing Committee recommends:

That measures designed to stress the importance of promoting the participation of ethnocultural communities be intensified within Québec's democratic institutions.

That jointly with community organizations, the government develop a citizenship training program for ethnocultural communities that includes ordered knowledge of our political institutions, how they work and the requirements and conditions for taking part in them.

That the approach to the teaching of citizenship given in educational institutions be designed specially for young people from the ethnocultural communities.

5.4 Information and participation awareness-raising and training

Citizen empowerment is best ensured by education and ongoing training in citizenship and democracy. That is why several recommendations in this report encourage increased and diligent participation in the various democratic and political institutions within our milieu. This awareness-raising and training in citizen participation is even more important today due to the new complexity of civil society.

Like a good number of modern societies, Québec has adopted a *Charter of Individual Rights and Freedoms* in which it is stated that *Every person is the possessor of the fundamental freedoms, including freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and freedom of association.*

Such great freedom is desirable, but it has the disadvantage of being easier than its corollary-responsibility. Nevertheless, life as a citizen requires that this liberty be balanced by a citizen obligation that is just as fundamental, that of getting along with the diversity of opinions, moral or religious beliefs and views of life that citizens include in the definition of their personal visions. Above all, it is the obligation to accept solidarity, which is one of the bases of democracy.

Since the Charter was adopted in 1975, this diversity has not ceased to emphasize the complexity of civil society. Since that time, exercising citizenship in this context presumes that citizens are prepared to do so. Two State bodies are responsible for educating and raising awareness of our civil rights and responsibilities: the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère des Relations avec les Citoyens et de l'Immigration. These two ministries assemble a large portion of the effort of the Québec State to promote the development of citizen competence and citizen education.

Evidently, from what the members of the Organizing Committee heard during our consultations, the citizens want more of this. First, they are seeking the creation of new democratic spaces such as the citizen councils mentioned in this report, information campaigns on exercising democracy, travelling speakers, more frequent meetings and exchanges with ministers and MNAs, spaces reserved for work on democracy and meetings on themes related to citizen participation in all of the libraries throughout the province of Québec, and free public education evening courses in the universities.

They also want objective and credible information, information designed to inform rather than to inflame. The citizens complain strongly about information that, according to them, is biased and often partisan, and delivered by the media-even more so since in Québec, the concentration of print and electronic media is relatively high.

The members of the Organizing Committee are of the opinion that this deep feeling of citizen powerlessness comes from a serious lack of historical background and citizen education that is weakening our society. The history of Québec is not well known and the perspective of the past is shrinking, especially among young people. For too many people, the future is based on the recent past. Obviously, the political system in which we live is poorly understood, and even unknown.

A lively citizenship requires an awareness of and education in history and the civic role of each person within the new complexity, and participation in any type of organization where democratic values are practised.

The citizens definitely want **to act** in this new and complex world. They want to take part in and have a grasp of the decisions that involve them. But, before acting, they want to **understand** and **learn**. They want not only to increase their understanding, but also their skills, their abilities to act as good citizens and true participants in democracy.

In the perspective of citizen empowerment, the Organizing Committee therefore underscores the urgency to take action with regard to awareness-raising, information and citizen education.

The Organizing Committee also points out that the challenges of awareness-raising and citizen education mean looking at broadcast supports such as the Internet, television networks, community networks and the National Assembly information network to reach the bulk of the population and encourage the largest number to participate. Television conferencing used on a wide scale would allow distant residents, for example, to interact and listen to the analysis and commentary of an expert resource taking part in a parliamentary committee following a question from a participant. Then, everyone would have access to the same information in order to form an opinion. Such avenues must be explored in order to implement a participatory democracy that serves the citizens, and their elected representatives.

RECOMMENDATION 14

The Organizing Committee recommends:

- **That priority be given to information as well as to awareness-raising and citizen education by implementing concrete and accessible means such as teaching material that can be made available to Québec communities.**

- **That expertise in awareness-raising, information and citizen education be made available to those individuals, organized bodies and public authorities that want to become involved in educating their populations about living as a citizen.**

- **That the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère des Relations avec les Citoyens et de l'Immigration be given the mandate to explore new access routes to mass citizen participation such as the information highway and teleconferencing.**

5.5 The participation of the First Nations in democracy in Québec

The participation of the First Nations in democracy in Québec has broad popular support. Citizen dialogue leans in the direction of negotiating nation to nation. This means that representatives of the Native Peoples and the Québec State come to an agreement on a way to make democracy work that respects both communities living in one and the same province of Québec.

The Organizing Committee recognizes the wishes of many native communities to protect their integrity as a people and to act as an independent nation.

Nevertheless, the Organizing Committee has noted that the suggestion to welcome Native Peoples into Québec's democratic bodies is very well received by the great majority of Québecers. For certain communities living in clearly defined territories, the persons heard during the popular consultation process agree that these territories should be turned into electoral districts and that the residents of the territories should elect an MNA to the National Assembly. With respect to the other communities spread throughout the province, they could name a representative to the National Assembly according to a mechanism that they could decide on themselves.

However, any agreement requiring the consent of at least two parties, the Organizing Committee considers that, in the circumstances, it is premature to make a formal recommendation on the subject.

VARIOUS OTHER CITIZEN POINTS OF VIEW

The opinions that follow concern directly or indirectly the mandate of the Organizing Committee. Even if no recommendation is made with respect to them, it seems useful to communicate them in this report given that they are widely shared by the citizens consulted.

The security of the election process

One of the questions put to the citizens touched on introducing voter cards. The citizens do not know the cost of issuing such a card and it shocks them that another card might be added to those they already have. However, generally speaking, they hope that measures to ensure the highest security for the election process can be strengthened: tightening up on the accuracy of the electoral lists, thorough verification by polling stations using cards already issued by the State.

The Organizing Committee does not believe that it is necessary to make a recommendation on the subject given that the government is aware of these issues. With regard to voter cards in particular, an exhaustive study was carried out by the Director General of Elections to which the Committee has nothing to add.

Limiting terms of office

To the question, *Do you want to limit the terms of office of the head of the government to two?*, opinion was divided. The Organizing Committee, without making a specific recommendation, is of the opinion that there is no reason for limiting the terms of office of the head of government by law since the will of the people at election time decides whether government leaders are re-elected or not.

Media influence

The type of general influence of the media concerning Québec political life was repeatedly criticized by the citizens during the public consultations. Many of them feel manipulated by information that appears biased and not transparent.

In an intense market economy, news becomes a commodity and, in the eyes of an editor-in-chief, good quality is what sells well. Thus, knowing the appetite of a good part of the population for rumour or the personal lives of politicians or stars, the media is not very concerned about possible damage to a person's reputation, and even less so about that of a group or a political party. All too often, we make judgments, interpret events or start rumours that raise suspicion or questions without thinking about the objectivity needed in a healthy democracy. The citizens tend to want information that is the most objective and fact-based to breathe fresh air into our democracy.

This media influence seems particularly heavy during election campaigns, especially with the publication of regular surveys that are of a nature to influence the undecided who follow the natural tendency to go over to the winning side. Some people suggested that surveys ought to be forbidden as soon as an election campaign starts.

Furthermore, the Organizing Committee remarked that the unfavourable opinion of men and women in politics is too often powered by the media. Since this issue does not fall within our mandate, the Organizing Committee does not find it relevant to make recommendations about it, but wishes to pass on this alarming message that was heard many times over during our tour.

The financing of political parties

Some citizens hoped for a tightening of the provisions of the *Act respecting the financing of political parties*. On the other hand in response to these demands, others asserted that Québec already has an effective law on the subject. Incidentally, the quality of this Act has been recognized by the federal government, which is now trying to emulate it. The Organizing Committee agrees with this assertion and does not find it suitable to make a recommendation on the subject.

Nonetheless, the Organizing Committee wishes to underscore that, contrary to what one newspaper announced during the consultations, it is incorrect to state that the majority of citizens desire State financing for the election campaigns of the political parties. Quite the reverse, this request was made on only one occasion and did not deserve the coverage this medium gave it.

CONCLUSION

In issuing our recommendations, the Organizing Committee has faithfully complied with the two objectives it set for itself from the start: citizen satisfaction with regard to their hopes for democracy and government efficiency. In this respect, the Organizing Committee ensured that our recommendations reflect these requirements.

While certain of these recommendations carry more consequences than others, the Organizing Committee maintains that it is important to consider each of them. The citizens on many occasions expressed the fact that many minor changes in the organization or functioning of our democratic institutions would eliminate numerous irritants that result in an undermining of these institutions' very credibility.

CONCLUSION

TOWARD A MODERN AND MODEL DEMOCRACY!

The reform of our democratic institutions appears to be an ***important and major component of Québecers' current vision of society***. In this renewal, Québecers see new spaces and new ways to participate in the decisions that will affect their lives and the lives of future generations. In this updating of our institutions, they see the opportunity to give themselves the necessary means to adapt to the changes brought about by globalization. They see in these changes the chance to take their rightful place in a modern democracy.

Québecers are a great people, but we are not numerous. Great, for our remarkable and continuing successes in many areas of activity among which, certainly, the main one is our success in surviving as a people. Great, also, for the hopes we place in democracy. Our numbers, while viewed as small beside the large, may be an asset in a world where globalization calls for two things: to be outward looking economically and to be internally strong both socially and culturally.

The citizens express their common vision as well as their desire to allow all of those who were born here and who have chosen to make their lives here to have their rightful place and to take it. They are aware of the fact that it is through the participation of the greatest number of people in political, social, economic and cultural debates that such visions are developed, shared and become outlooks that are drafted into founding documents and that become the source of common inspiration and pride.

The members of the Organizing Committee strongly share this point of view. In addition, they feel that these are prerequisites for our democracy to remain strong, enriching and broadly based and not fear including all those who wish to contribute to the harmonious development of Québec. Things must be clear: the future of Québec cannot only have the appearance of democracy. It must be based on a democracy that allows the greatest number to better understand the issues, to better share the common vision and to better act together. Are not the ultimate goals of democracy to ensure the survival, development and flourishing of the individuals and communities that make up a society?

This said, continually and constantly renewed education with respect to democracy and citizenship is the basis of a lively democracy. We must put our hope in a ***general democracy, a democracy that is direct, political, economic, ecological and social.***[5]

Québec is already well on the way. Civil partnership can count strongly on the groups, individuals, men and women who nourish and advance the great social and ethical values of *equality before the law, sovereignty of the people, the guarantee by the State of citizen rights, respect for individual freedoms and citizen responsibility.*

Québecers have democratic spaces where they enjoy the benefits of ***popular sovereignty first in its political sense***, initially by having a say in the exercise of power as members of their association or political party, second, by expressing their will through strictly egalitarian *universal suffrage* and third by exercising control over the authorities they elect.

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5. Takis Fotopoulos, *Vers une démocratie générale*, Le Seuil, 2001.

Québecers also enjoy ***popular sovereignty in its legal sense*** by recognizing the authority of elected representatives meeting in general assembly. While holding the ultimate power of the decision-making process, they also have the wisdom to recognize the need for sharing competencies for establishing rules to set the limits on their power. Thus arises the requisite sister concept of popular sovereignty and ***direct democracy-the crucial representative, democracy***. Obviously, practicing this type of democracy is educational, instructive; it makes members responsible for their actions and a guarantee of long-term survival.

When it comes to governance of the State, three conditions for popular sovereignty are necessary: *first*, that the main political authorities be elected or appointed according to the rules of the political system in effect which excludes non-elected persons occupying positions that by nature could influence elected representatives including heads of government or their ministers; *second*, that the electorate be made up of all citizens of voting age; *third*, that the will of elected representatives not be controlled by other, non-democratic, authorities, which includes hidden powers and any influence from business forces.

This type of State governance presumes an ability to better grasp the political, economic, social or cultural issues and opens the way to a common vision and a perception of *how to live together*. It is in this perspective of *how to live together* that the echo of the main demands that emerged from this important consultation process make themselves heard. Citizens wish to better knov and master the rules for living in a participatory democracy.

The echo of the demands of the majority of citizens consulted, taken up in the expression of a firm popular will at the Estates General, is clearly heard in favour of a reform that places the citizens at the heart of our democratic institutions!

The members of the Organizing Committee have heard these messages. We have understood them. We have worked so that the expression of this popular will make the difference and change things. It is in this spirit that we submit this report.

The members of the Organizing Committee had a leitmotif: ***Citizen empowerment!*** We can say: Mission accomplished. The citizens have taken their rightful place. They have become the architects for the initial reform of their institutions. The work has begun, and the outcome is promising.

Let us make Québec an example of a modern and model democracy!

THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

RECOMMENDATION 1

That the government take note of the firm popular desire to amend current voting procedures by submitting to Québecers the opportunity to adopt by referendum, before the end of the first half of the next term of government, voting procedures that accord the regions proportional representation, meaning that:

- The National Assembly is made up of 125 MNAs elected in regional ridings.
- Ridings should be made up of the 15 existing administrative regions, plus Montréal divided into four ridings, and Québec City into two ridings.
- Each region and each party presents a slate of candidates that contains the number of MNAs to be elected (for example, five in Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean, as is currently the case).
- The voting method is called panachage. Thus, in a region electing five MNAs, voters have five choices that they make as they wish from all of the slates presented (without necessarily taking into account the order set by the parties).

(One member of the Organizing Committee recorded dissent on this recommendation.)

RECOMMENDATION 2

That all measures relating to the form of government, the relationship between the governing and the governed and with respect to the organization of our democratic institutions be included in a fundamental law, voted in by the National Assembly and in confirmation of the decision of the people expressed during a referendum.

That the fundamental laws be assembled in a Québec constitution, such constitution having to be approved or amended by a majority of the citizens during a referendum.

RECOMMENDATION 3

That the National Assembly adopt a law recognizing the citizen right to *popular initiative*.

RECOMMENDATION 4

That voluntary changes be brought to the relationships between executive and legislative powers in order that the separation of power between the government and the National Assembly be more solid so as to create an open and participatory type of governance.

RECOMMENDATION 5

That a law be adopted setting elections for the month of May, every four years, at a date determined by the government.

RECOMMENDATION 6

That appointments to senior management positions within the machinery of government and paragovernmental bodies, excepting those that are already provided for by law, not be the exclusive privilege of the premier but rather, upon recommendation by the premier, approved by the National Assembly following examination and recommendation by a parliamentary committee.

That the parliamentary committees, in theory open to all, be more concretely so by taking into account the contingencies of each mandate with respect to the costs and expenses related to carrying out the mandate.

RECOMMENDATION 7

That the government proceed with a study for the purpose of restructuring the role of MNA and that a committee made up of MNAs be part of this process.

That, twice during the course of their terms, each MNA organize a meeting with their fellow citizens in their ridings for purposes of accountability, exchange and orientation.

That all MNAs be able to vote on all issues so as to accommodate the will of their voters during any debate in the National Assembly except:

a) When a confidence vote is presented against the government. For this purpose, it must be understood that rejection of draft legislation does not constitute a vote of non-confidence against the government;

b) When it involves draft legislation to follow up on formal and precise commitments publicized during the preceding election campaign, such commitments being clearly announced as binding on party discipline;

c) When it involves budget or financial legislation.

That all MNAs be able to vote on all issues so as to accommodate the will of their voters. For this purpose, it is recommended to amend the laws as needed so as to recognize that legislation proposed by the government is reputed not to be a vote of confidence or of non-confidence against the government, except in the case of a previously announced vote of non-confidence or in the case of budget laws or legislation touching on finance.

RECOMMENDATION 8

That, in addition to creating an open and participatory type of governance within the existing political system, the government award to an independent group of non-parliamentarians made up in the majority by citizens, the task of studying in greater depth the appropriateness and feasibility of a system that would allow the citizens to:

- Elect heads of government by universal suffrage so that they might form their governments by appointing ministers not necessarily from among the members of the National Assembly, these ministers as well as the heads of government not being part of the national Assembly;

- And elect the members of the National Assembly by separate vote.

- That this committee also study the measures to take to modernize the process relative to adopting laws, the functioning of our democratic institutions, the management of the business of the State and the rules of governance of Crown corporations in the context of contemporary life and progress in technology and communications and transmission of data and information.

RECOMMENDATION 9

That the government create the Québec Council on Citizenship and Democracy, independent of partisan politics, and whose responsability would be to permanently monitor the quality and development of democratic life in Québec through research and citizen consultations, and appoint its first chairperson for a term of one year. This council will be made up of representatives named by each of the regional councils made up of volunteers from each administrative region, starting from the second year the council's chairperson being chosen from among and by the members of the council.

RECOMMENDATION 10

That the government accelerate the decentralization of powers to the regions in order to make them true partners in the development of Québec, based on agreements to be concluded with each of them.

RECOMMENDATION 11

That the government contribute to the creation of a private fund for the purpose of supporting women to enter politics.

That political parties that, after a general election have at least 30% of women among their representatives, receive a reimbursement supplemented by its election expenses until they have attained 50% of women representatives.

That the *À égalité pour décider* program be instated permanently and that its financial resources be increased. Moreover, a portion of the budget of this program should be reserved to support projects designed for native women as well as women from the different ethnocultural communities.

RECOMMENDATION 12

That the voting age be maintained at 18.

That courses in citizenship and democratic life be included in the compulsory school curriculum from primary school up to college level.

That the development of practical training activities be encouraged and supported in the public and parapublic structures as well as in the components of civil society, based on democratic values and individual responsibility, in which decision-making is collective.

RECOMMENDATION 13

That measures designed to stress the importance of promoting the participation of ethnocultural communities be intensified within Québec's democratic institutions.

That jointly with community organizations, the government develop for ethnocultural communities a citizenship training program that includes ordered knowledge of our political institutions, how they work and the requirements and conditions for taking part in them.

That the approach to the teaching of citizenship given in educational institutions be designed specially for young people from the ethnocultural communities.

RECOMMENDATION 14

That priority be given to information as well as to awareness-raising and citizen education by implementing concrete and accessible means such as teaching material that can be made available to Québec communities.

That expertise in awareness-raising, information and citizen education be made available to those individuals, organized bodies and public authorities that want to become involved in educating their populations about living as a citizen.

That the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration be given the mandate to explore new access routes to mass citizen participation such as the information highway and teleconferencing.

APPENDIX 1

PLANS DISCUSSED AND DEMOCRATIC REFORMS CARRIED OUT IN CANADA

ALBERTA

- Adoption of an act respecting the election of senators representing Alberta in the Canadian Parliament.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

- On August 23, 2001, adoption of a act setting the date of the next election for May 17, 2005 and, after that on the second Tuesday of May every four years.

- In 1996, adoption of an act establishing referenda on popular initiative and the "recall" of MLAs.

- Adoption of an act making compulsory the holding of a referendum before constitutional changes can be adopted by the Legislative Assembly.

- Adoption of an act establishing referenda on government initiatives and that bind the government in the event that a proposal wins more than 50% of the votes.

- Authorization of the Provincial Returning Officer to collect signatures in order to hold a referendum on amending voting procedures and establishing a method of proportional representation.

- Government announcement on September 20, 2002, by which it establishes citizen assemblies to study possible models for reforming the province's electoral system. Gordon Gibson was appointed to organize these citizen assemblies and to establish a schedule ending in May 2005, the date of a future referendum, in the event that a model for a new electoral system is proposed by the citizen assembly.

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

- Announcement on January 21, 2003, of the creation of a commission on the reform of voting procedures presided by the former Chief Judge of the Provincial Court, Mr. Norman Carruthers. An interim report will be produced in the fall of 2003, the final report is expected in 2004.

MANITOBA

- Adoption of an act making the holding of a referendum compulsory before the tabling of draft legislation concerning increases in income tax or certain government taxes and that ties the right to table the draft legislation to attaining a majority outcome in favour of the referendum.

- Adoption of the *Elections Finances Act* designed to control the funding of political parties and certain expenses outside election periods. The provisions of the Act are heavily inspired by the Québec act.

ONTARIO

- Adoption of the 1999 act on the protection of taxpayers that stipulates that no new income tax or net increase of an existing income tax can come into effect without the prior authorization of the voters consulted in a referendum.

- Adoption by the Liberal Party of Ontario of a charter of democratic rights for Ontario as an element of reform for the next election campaign. Notably provided for in it are:

  - Fixed date elections every four years.

  - The holding of a public debate and a compulsory referendum on the review of voting procedures.

  - Liberation of MLAs from the obligation to constantly tow "the party line" in the Legislative Assembly in order to allow them to present draft legislation.

  - Prohibition of partisan government publicity (controlled by the Auditor General).

  - Creation of a committee of 18 citizens who will hold public hearings and make public reports on policies that might be adopted by the government.

  - Limiting of election expenses and expenses during political party leadership races.

SASKATCHEWAN

- Adoption of an act establishing referenda on government initiative as well as plebiscites on government or Legislative Assembly initiative, or at the request of 15 % of voters. The government is bound by the outcome of a referendum when a proposal wins more than 60% of the votes. The outcome of a plebiscite binds neither the Legislative Assembly nor the government.

PARLIAMENT OF CANADA

- Tabling of draft bills (C-322 and C-478) by an MP concerning the holding of public hearings and, eventually, a referendum on revision of voting procedures.

- Think tank on citizenship and democracy, launched by the Bloc québécois, which adopted four broad proposals to increase democratic participation in Québec:

  - Establishment of a right of public initiative for studying draft legislation and the holding of referenda.

  - Reform of voting procedures in order to introduce proportional representation.

- Loosening of party discipline and the obligation to put to the vote draft bills and motions presented by MPs.

- Citizen participation within decentralized institutions namely by the direct suffrage election of RCM council members, by the establishment of municipal and regional referenda on public initiative and by examining the creation of a parliamentary House of Regions.

- Tabling of a draft bill (C-241) by an MP in order that, barring exceptions, federal general elections be held on the third Monday of June every four years.

- On October 1, 2001, address by the Prime Minister of Canada in response to the Throne Speech in which was announced the tabling, during next November, of an exhaustive draft reform on election and political party funding. Also announced was the tabling of a draft bill, between now and the end of October 2002, concerning political agents, the code of conduct for MPs and the role and responsibilities of ethics advisors.

PLANS UNDER DISCUSSION ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD

AUSTRALIA

- Creation by the state of Victoria of a Constitution Commission charged with leading broad consultation on a reform of political institutions, namely:

- Fixed date elections every four years.

- Adoption of proportional voting procedures.

- The roles and responsibilities of the two legislative houses.

- The relationships between executive and legislative powers.

SCOTLAND

- A commission of the Scottish Parliament recommends introducing proportional representation into the local government election system as early as 2002.

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

- **Congress and the House of Representatives**

  A draft bill was presented in order to allow the states to elect their representatives to Congress according to proportional voting procedures, and to examine instituting a preferential voting system for presidential elections.

- **New York State**

  On April 29, 2002, the New York State Senate approved an amendment to the State constitution in order to introduce referenda on popular initiative.

- **The County and City of San Francisco**

  On March 5, 2002, the voters of San Francisco County adopted by referendum a preferential voting procedure for the County and City of San Francisco.

FRANCE

- In June 2000, the law on male-female parity came into effect.
- Tabling of a draft constitutional law relative to the referendum on popular initiative.
- The opening of public debate on reforming the 5th Republic.

THE UNITED KINGDOM

- Tabling of a draft bill on the holding of fixed date elections.
- Tabling by the government of a white paper on the creation of regional governments, elected according to a voting procedure that comprises a form of proportional representation.
- Public debate opened by the Electoral Reform Society on the right to vote at 16 years of age.

APPENDIX 2

FAMOUS QUOTES ON DEMOCRACY AND ACCOUNTS TAKEN FROM THE BRIEFS SUBMITTED TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

"There can be no patriotism without liberty; no liberty without virtue; no virtue without citizens. Create citizens and you have everything you need; without them you have nothing but debased slaves, from the rulers of the state downward."

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract

FAMOUS QUOTES ON DEMOCRACY

"La démocratie, c'est la grande Patrie."

Victor Hugo, *Actes et paroles*.

"Among democratic nations, each generation is a new people."

Alexis de Tocqueville

"As I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master. This expresses my idea of democracy."

Abraham Lincoln, Speech to the Senate

"Comment gouverner les démocraties s'il faut être populaire pour être élu et impopulaire pour réformer?"

Luc Ferry, *Penser le jugement*.

"Le contact humain est le véhicule essentiel de la démocratie. "

Jacques Chirac, Press conference in Rio de Janeiro, June 29, 1999.

"I have cherished the ideal of a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities. It is an ideal which I hope to live for and to achieve. But if needs be, it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die."

Nelson Mandela, Statement to the Supreme Court of Pretoria, April 20, 1964.

ACCOUNTS TAKEN FROM THE BRIEFS SUBMITTED TO THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

The elected representatives' point of view

The power of the legislature is slave to the power of the executive, which is itself concentrated in a few hands to the point that the expression "democratic deficit" becomes a euphemism. These days, Parliament is little more than a theatre, and not one of the best. In reality, we are living under a disguised oligarchy. A few people, twelve or fifteen . . . exercise the power. Who are they? First in line, the Premier, a kindly and, we hope, enlightened caudillo.

Pierre de Bellefeuille, Journalist and MNA from Deux-Montagne to the Québec National Assembly from 1976 to 1985

From the outset, we have to admit that a growing feeling of apathy is developing at all levels of Québec society with regard to politics. The cynicism and disillusionment of the population about our public institutions and, more especially, politicians are already very visible in the surveys. They are translated, election after election, by increasing disaffection and a more and more anaemic voter turn-out at election time.

Stéphane Bergeron, MNA from Verchères-Les Patriotes

The Abenaki Nation is now located in Odanak and Wôlinak. We are as strong as a young caribou, a young eagle; we want to use our own wings to fly. Stop giving us fish; instead, give us the fishing rod so we can learn to fish for ourselves. We want to have a place in Québec City, in the Parliament. We want at least 1%, not in the second house because that is the place we have always had. Yes, we want a Native Person in Québec to represent us, to vote for the First Nations. We want to make up our own minds about our future and the future of our children and our wives and our mothers.

Abenaki Odanak Government

The political parties' point of view

For the Action démocratique du Québec, the democratic heritage of René Lévesque could not be forgotten. Therefore, starting in 1995, our political education took up the theme of institutional reform to create a version of them that is adapted to the realities of the great contemporary democracies. Since then, our thinking has never ceased and our platform, which reflects this thinking, has been enriched by ideas that are sometimes generally held, sometimes innovative, but always with the purpose of putting citizens first. That's why, when the Committee on Institutions and the General Secretariat for the Reform of Institutions began their consultations, we were ready.

Action démocratique du Québec

May we, in the reform of democratic institutions, first concern ourselves with clearly establishing the separation of the powers of the legislative, executive and judiciary, assure the independence from government of the National Assembly and of each of its members and ensure male-female parity in our decision-making bodies

May we state clearly, in the Constitution of Québec, the fundamental principle of popular sovereignty and confirm that a sovereign people, when approving a proposal for constitutional amendment submitted by its National Assembly, exercise its supreme decision-making power.

Bloc québécois

On three occasions, in 1944, 1966 and 1998, the party that won the most votes did not elect the majority of MNAs and was not able to form a government.

What is astounding in this phenomenon is not so much that it can occur, but rather that it can occur relatively frequently and that it always favours our adversaries. We can no longer speak of winners taking all; it is a hijacking of democracy.

Québec's three main political parties have, in their respective platforms, expressed their intention to amend the current voting procedures. At our last general Caucus, we adopted the following motion:

"[a Liberal government] will, within the two years following the election and after consultation, proceed to reforming the voting procedures in order to introduce methods of proportional representation."

We can state that the principle of such a reform is a consensus.
Parti libéral du Québec

Therefore, reform is urgent and essential. Our sincerest hope is that this reform will lead us to surmount the crisis of confidence and the difficulties that Québec now faces and that it be the beginning of a civic turnaround.
Parti québécois (Comité national des jeunes)

We start from the principle that elections begin with selection. The selection of candidates as it is done currently remains the private preserve of the political parties. It is the political parties that pre-select candidates, and this runs counter to the right of citizens to elect and to be elected. With respect to this, we must amend the political process in order to create a mechanism that allows all citizens to directly exercise their right to elect and be elected. We believe that voters assembled in citizen committees should be able to select the candidates and take part in drawing up the platforms they find suitable. Furthermore, the PMLQ is of the opinion that the electoral process must be amended so that elected representatives and all institutions are to serve the electorate by providing it with the means to make informed choices in elections, to remove elected representatives who no longer represent their voters and to present draft legislation on its own initiative.
Parti marxiste-léniniste du Québec

Opinions on participatory and direct democracy

Yes, a debate on electoral reform risks being too tight because, yes, our democracy basically lacks inspiration. Measures that are to a large extent focused on representation will not be enough to support a participatory democracy, without which social interaction (in the broadest sense) will not be able to produce enrichment.
Michel Marquis

As a recent graduate of the political science program at McGill University, I am rather proud that the Québec government launched this massive public consultation on our democratic institutions. That said, there's still many a slip 'twixt cup and lip with regard to what seems to be the Committee's goal-giving power back to the citizens through the reform of our democratic institutions!
Catherine Foisy

The choice of these goals reflects the basic values of democracy-equality, freedom of expression and justice. In fact, equality encourages giving equal weight to each vote. By encouraging citizens to express their opinions by allowing them to create a valid opposition to government, freedom of expression is reinforced. Last, everyone has the right to speak-that's justice.
Simon Guillemette

The complaints are many. Indeed, how do you ignore the disproportionate influence of the power of money over elected representatives, the obedience of MNAs to their party rather than to their voters, election campaigns where image means more than ideas, the manipulation of information, the obligation of defenders of the environment, the opposers of poverty and neoliberal globalization to take to the streets for lack of means to make themselves heard in parliament, the serious distortions in representation that permit the election of governments that do not have the majority of votes, the under-representation of women in parliament, the control of the premier not only over executive power but over the legislative assembly and over the process of appointing judges, etc.
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux du Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean (CSN)

Québec must not be afraid to find solutions that may sometimes be controversial and move forward. There have been enough studies of you name it! Let them read them and take some action! Enough money wasted-some political courage, please! There will always be people that are happy and people that aren't happy but if the people involved are unanimous for a solution that makes sense-let's get on with it! Let's live with the certainty that we acted well and improve the solution if we can.
Louise Ladurantaye

Opinions on the political system

The best way to considerably reduce the influence of the party line is to free the legislative power from the yoke of the power of the executive. To do so, it seems to us that adopting a presidential-type system would best meet the objective.
Carl Châteauvert

Nonetheless, the Minister's proposal, if it is brought to be, will supplement the action of the people's representatives. In the British model, ours since 1792, such reinforcement is not possible. Rather than giving members free hand, this model favours control by the majority party to such a point that members are subject to partisan constraints intended to ensure the stability of the party in power. The opposition does the same. As soon as we adopt a republican-type model we rid Québec of the British model, at least for exercising provincial powers. If one day, Québec becomes an independent country, we will already have gone through one step toward instituting a political system that strengthens the role of MNAs and the power of the voters.
Claude Bariteau et André Campeau

Party discipline. Actually, this tradition should be prohibited. It should really not be part of our traditions because it's the political parties that established it to make it easier for them to rule. Free votes would restore the credibility of the back-bench MNA who is quashed right now by his own party executive. Besides, party discipline allows the government to collect the executive and legislative sides, which dangerously concentrates the effective exercise of power.
Marc-André Boivin

We can and should look at politics differently, meaning reducing the importance of "party line" by increasing the accountability of elected representatives to their voters. As a first step toward this major change, we feel that each vote should carry the same weight in consideration of effective representation in the National Assembly.
Groupe Solidarité Justice

Reflective thinking about the political system that governs us is a necessity within a society that has hopes for democracy like ours. It is essential to spread these debates to the whole of society and to support discussion continually. A society is a parody of democracy if it believes that an occasional questioning is enough.
Simon Latulippe

My vote means nothing. MNAs don't care about our votes after an election. Politics-it's useless. I've heard these three comments too many times. Hearing them over and over worries me a lot. I actually find it serious, especially in a State that seems to want to give democracy a chance. Serious because we should be afraid that some cynics might say that democracy is useless using the very same reasons I just said to you. So, to avoid that happening and in order for democracy to be truly effective in Québec, many changes must be made to our political system.
Yves Dandurand

Opinions on the electoral system

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal would like to underscore the interest we have in the issues related to the reform of Québec's democratic institutions. The Board's opinion is that there exist important links between the functioning of our democratic institutions, citizen participation and the economic health of Québec.

May any reform of our democratic institutions take into account, as a fundamental democratic principle, the necessary equity of the vote of each of the voters in Québec, regardless of the region in which they live.
The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Montreal

The next voting procedures should be based on the four following principles:

- *The obligation to reflect the will of the people as faithfully as possible.*
- *The goal of equal representation for men and women.*
- *The embodiment of Québec's diversity and openness to political pluralism.*
- *The reflection of the importance of the regions in the reality of Québec.*

Mouvement Démocratie nouvelle

Voting is a democratic act that is too important to exercise with a tool as anti-democratic and inadequate as our current voting procedures.
Action Plus de Sherbrooke inc.

Reforming the voting procedures is the first priority with regard to reform because voting procedures are at the heart of the fundamental process of exercising democracy. On the other hand, reforming the voting procedures already has the support of a large number of citizens, of former politicians of all stripes, of unions, of community groups and university researchers. This type of consensus calls for an obligation to act on it, at the latest a year after the election of the next government. Reform of our voting procedures should be a deep and significant reform in order to make the National Assembly most faithfully representative of the preferences of the electorate and of Québec's diversity.
Martin Dupuis

Opinions on the representation of the regions

The CRD-Estrie welcomes the initiative of the government to wish to reform Québec's democratic institutions and hopes that this important issue raises the greatest possible interest among the population of every region of Québec.

We believe that such a reform must be carried out in parallel with increased regionalization and decentralization of the existing powers of the State in favour of the regions, the RCMs and municipalities. This movement toward local and regional levels should also, in our opinion, take place based on the recognized principles of subsidiarity and participation by civil society in decision-making.
Conseil régional de développement de l'Estrie

The true goal is the self-sufficiency of each of the regions. If we want a strong Québec, regional self-sufficiency is essential regardless of whether we are in favour of independence or federalism.
Jacques Lamarre

A House of Regions would oblige us to re-examine the roles and mandates of the legislative assembly in order to share them, and this appears to us to be a certain road to inefficiency. For the moment, we believe that regionalization and decentralization must be emphasized and consolidated in compliance with the will and drive of local and regional milieus. For us, this means increasing the ability of the regions to plan and carry out their own development. It also means consolidating the place of civil society in the locales where decisions are made on both the local and regional level. More particularly, we are thinking of the practices of active democracy, notably in the centres locaux de développement (CLD) and in the conseils régionaux de développement (CRD). It would be interesting to think of a more important role for MNAs within the consultation bodies that the Gouvernement du Québec recognizes. The commitments made during the recent meeting of the regions (November 12-14, 2002) are a step in that direction.
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de l'Estrie (CSN)

Opinions on the representation of young people

The debate here is to know whether young people of 16 have the required maturity and knowledge to exercise the right to vote. According to us, in the current state of things, the answer is no. However, with the introduction into the schools of a course on citizenship before the fourth year of secondary school, we think that young people might not only have the knowledge required but they might also be better prepared than many adults to be able to exercise their rights as voters. Therefore, we think that the right to vote could be dropped to 16 conditional on implementation of a compulsory course on citizenship.
Association générale des étudiantes et des étudiants du cégep de Jonquière

Does it not make sense then if we want to encourage young people to take an interest in democracy, to give them some say in the parts of society that have the greatest effect on their lives? It is our opinion that youth would be interested in participating in two areas of our democracy: schools and community organizations. Both youth and the institutions would benefit as a result because both would gain in legitimacy and, as a result of the youthful inclusion and input, new blood and ideas could only help to improve their services.
The Greater Quebec Movement

Practically all of the young people consulted said they disagreed with the proposal to lower the required voting age to 16. It is not so much a question of maturity as a question of logic. Since we have to draw the line somewhere, why not accept the legal age of majority.
Table régionale Jeunesse de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue

Opinions on the representation of women

We find it very important that positive action measures be taken in order to achieve equality in the number of women and men elected so that women can be better represented and their interests better defended. Nevertheless, we find that we should avoid extreme measures like fines or penalties to the public funding of political parties that do not present equal slates because it is so easy to get around such measures for political parties that do not favour female-male equity in the National Assembly. However, given the fact that they have not been able to create ties, organize networks for themselves as much as men, seeing their family obligations, they absolutely must be provided support, training as needed, adequate funding for their campaigns and taking into consideration the costs of daycare or any other family assistance necessary by reimbursing this type of expense. WE INSIST ON EQUITY IN FEMALE-MALE REPRESENTATION.
La Marie Debout

Voting procedures cannot on their own guarantee an equal representation of men and women, but legislative measures should require parties to present an equal number of male and female candidates.
Groupe Solidarité Justice

Women want to get into politics, but differently! Therefore, we have to reinvent the roads that lead to parliament!

First, we must get a complete picture of the scope of the changes that introducing proportional voting procedures will make. Everything will be new: the way of recruiting candidates, of campaigning, for the voters, of following the campaign, of voting, of governing . . .

These changes will require a massive popular education campaign and call for profound changes in mentality. It is imperative not only that the population be supported throughout the whole of the implementation of reform of voting procedures, but also that women be made aware of the new avenues that are offered to them.
Collectif Féminisme et Démocratie

Opinions on the representation of ethnocultural communities

I would like to see every citizen feel that he is truly represented by someone from their own milieu who answers their particular characteristics (for example, a fair representation of the ethnic groups). May we listen to and take into consideration as often as possible the wishes of the population.
Éribert Charles

We can create a National Assembly that is more representative and that is more up-to-date with the issues for cultural communities, but we need, among other things, the willingness of the elected representatives and the political institutions, and appropriate voting procedures. Let's elect MNAs that come from cultural communities-MNAs who celebrate diversity and are ready to work hard to turn it into reality!
Forum d'action des communautés culturelles

Taking into account ethnocultural diversity is a social issue that concerns all democratic states. So, it would be appropriate to include this aspect in the debate that is going on currently on the reform of Québec's democratic institutions. One of the challenges will also be to encourage the participation of a wide and diversified range of citizens from various milieus by providing mechanisms for participating, inclusive structures and spaces for consultation.
Conseil des relations interculturelles

APPENDIX 3

JOINT BRIEFS TABLED BEFORE THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE ESTATES GENERAL ON THE REFORM OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Name of the organization
Action démocratique du Québec (ADQ)
Action Plus de Sherbrooke inc.
Association des régions du Québec
Association générale des étudiants et étudiantes du cégep de Jonquière
Barreau du Québec
Bloc Québécois (BQ)
Centre d'aide et de lutte contre les agressions à caractère sexuel (CALACS)
Carrefour communautaire du Québec
Carrefour Pointe-Saint-Charles
Confédération des syndicats nationaux (CSN)
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux du Bas-Saint-Laurent (CSN)
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux de l'Estrie (CSN)
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux du Montréal métropolitain (CSN)
Conseil central des syndicats nationaux Saguenay—Lac-Saint-Jean (CSN)
Centre d'action bénévole du Lac Saint-Pierre
Centre d'éducation des femmes La Marie Debout
Centre de femmes du Pays de Maria-Chapdelaine
Centre des femmes de Laval
Centre régional de développement de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue (CRD)
Centre régional de développement de l'Abitibi-Témiscamingue jeunesse (CRD)
Centre régional de développement de l'Estrie (CRD)
Centre régional de développement de la Côte-Nord (CRD)
Chambre de commerce du Montréal métropolitain
Chambre des notaires
Citoyens et citoyennes de la circonscription de Borduas
Comité anti-zléa Outaouais
Comité national des jeunes du Parti québécois
Communauté de base Les Chemins

Confédération des associations d'étudiants et étudiantes de l'Université Laval (CADEUL)
Conseil catholique d'expression anglaise
Conseil de la santé et du bien-être
Conseil des fermières de Saint-Prosper
Conseil du statut de la femme
Conseil permanent de la jeunesse
Conseil des relations interculturelles (CRI)
Corporation de développement communautaire de Laval
Démocratie contractuelle
École nationale d'aéronautique
Fédération de l'âge d'or du Québec (FADOQ)
Fédération des associations étudiantes du campus de l'Université de Montréal (FAECUM)
Fédération des femmes du Québec
Fédération étudiante collégiale du Québec (FECQ)
Fédération étudiante universitaire du Québec (FEUQ)
Féminisme et Démocratie
Femmes et politique municipale de l'Estrie
Fondation Accès Musique inc., conjointement avec la Société du patrimoine vivant et la Coalition de l'industrie du disque québécoise
Forum d'action des communauté culturelles
Forum Jeunesse de l'île de Montréal
Front des personnes assistées sociales du Québec (FPASQ)
Gouvernement abénakis d'Odanak
Greater Quebec Movement
Groupe Femme, Politique et Démocratie
Groupe de réflexion sur la réforme des institutions démocratiques
L'Autre Parole
La Cité des mots
Ligue des droits et libertés
Mères avec projet de vie
Mouvement Démocratie nouvelle (MDN)
Mouvement national des Québécoises et Québécois (MNQ)
Mouvement pour une nouvelle constitution québécoise (MONOCOQ)
Mouvement Relève Amos Région
Municipalité régionale de comté de Maria-Chapdelaine (MRC)
Municipalité régionale de comté du Témiscamingue (MRC)

Observatoire québécois de la démocratie
Parti libéral du Québec (PLQ)
Parti marxiste-léniniste du Québec (PMLQ)
Parti québécois de Montréal Centre (PQ)
Population et Collaboration (POPCO)
Projet elementa
Projet Genèse
Rassemblement pour l'indépendance du Québec (RIQ)
Rassemblement pour un pays souverain
Regroupement des citoyens de Saguenay
Regroupement pour l'initiative sociale du Québec (RISQUE)
Réseau D'Ici
Réseau Les Sœurs de Sainte-Anne (SSA) Justice sociale
Société d'histoire Riches-Lieux
Société de la jeunesse anglophone
Société nationale de l'Est
Société nationale des Québécoises et Québécois (SNQ) - région du Richelieu-Saint-Laurent
Société nationale des Québécoises et Québécois (SNQ) - région de Lanaudière
Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Montréal (SSJB) - section de Ludger-Duvernay
Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste de Québec (SSJB)
Société Saint-Jean-Baptiste du Centre-du-Québec (SSJB)
Solidarité Justice
Solidarité rurale du Québec
Syndicat de la fonction publique du Québec (SFPQ)
Syndicat des professeurs du Collège Jean-de-Brébeuf
Table de concertation des femmes du Bas-Saint-Laurent
Ville de Montréal
Vision Femmes Beauce-Sartigan

INDIVIDUAL BRIEFS TABLED BEFORE THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE OF THE ESTATES GENERAL ON THE REFORM OF DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS

Last name	First name
Allard	Pierre J.C.
Alvarez	Éric
Arcoragi	Jean-Pierre
Aubé	Claudette D.
Barcelo	Juliette
Bariteau	Claude
Beauregard	Dominique
Bellavance	Mario
Bérard	Luce S.
Bergeron	Jean-François
Bergeron	Stéphane
Bernier-Genest	Carle
Bertrand	Guy
Bertrand	Robert
Bisson	Perry
Bissonnette	Claude
Boisseau	Jean
Boisvert	Julie
Boivin	Guy
Boivin	Jacques
Boivin	Marc-André
Bonnardeaux	J.L.
Boulais	Marcel
Bouvier	Jean-Marc
Breault	Françoise
Butler	Anthony
Cardinal	Julien
Caron	C.
Boudreault	D.
Chartrand-Sperlich	Madeleine
Chénier	Jean-Félix
Cliche	Paul
Cloutier	Bruno
Contant	Robert
Corbo	Claude
Côté	Pierre-F.
Dandurand	Yves
De Bellefeuille	Pierre
Desbiens	Paul-André
Deschamps	Fernand
Doody	Brian
Dorion	François
Dourdeau	Alexandre
Doyon	Léo
Ducharme	Bertrand
Dufour	Christian
Dupras	Samuel
Dupuis	Martin
Durand	Guy
Dutil	Robert
Dutil	Yvan
Eme	Valérie
Éverard	Thierry
Foisy	Catherine
Fontaine	Anne
Forest	Jean
Forester	Harold
Fortier	Mario
Fortin	Nicole
Fortin	Patrice
Gagné	Pierre

Garant	Roger
Gaudet	Stéphane
Gauld	Maxime
Gaumond	Réal
Gauvin	F.P.
Martin	E.
Geldof	André F.
Gibson	Andrew
Giroux	Paulette
Goyette	Mathieu
Guay	Lorraine
Guibord	Daniel J.M.
Guillemette	Simon
Hajaly	Robert
Henri	Robert
Héroux	Hélène
Hill	Joan
Huot	André
Jean	Dominique
Johnston	Diane
Kahlé	André
Kemp	Roger
Labelle	Raymond
Labrecque	Laurent
Lacoste	Gilles
Laferrière	Jasmin
Lalande	Claude
Lalande	Claude
Lalongé	Luc
Lamarre	Jacques
Lamoureux	Diane
Lamoureux	Pierre
Lamy	Gaëtane

Langlois	Pierre-Luc
Lanthier	Guy-Michel
Larose	Patrick
Latulippe	Simon
Lavoie	Frédérick
Leclerc	Yves
Leduc	Marc
Legault	Yves
Léger	Jacques
Litvak	David
Lupien	Martin
Marquis	Michel
Martel	Alexandre
Rivet	François
Martel	Mario
Martel	Serge
Martin	Paul
Marvelki	Antoine
Mouvet	Eugène A.L.H.
Ouellette	Philippe
Ouimet	Jean
Pinard	Marie-France
Pagé	Michel
Parenteau	Robert
Parthenios	Georges
Pelletier	Line
Perreault	Andrée
Pigeon	Lucien
Poirier	Yvon
Pouliot	Vincent
Prevost	Robert
Racine	Pierre
Ricard	Maxime

Richard	Denis
Rondeau	Sylvain
Rouillon	Stéphane
Rousseau	Michel
Roy	Michel
Roy	Serge
Saint-Jacques	Stéphane
Saint-Jean	Daniel
Salvas	François
Simard	Pierre
Tardif	Robert
Thériault	Paul
Thibault	Marc
Tremblay	Guy
Tremblay	Hélène
Tremblay	Mireille
Trigo-Gill	Monica
Trottier	Michel
Vaillancourt	Hugo
Vallée	Régis
Verhas	Michel
Viens	Marc
Vincent	Gérard

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